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'I wrote with my pencil in my Common Prayer Book—

Vita ordinanda.
Biblia legenda.
Theologiae opera danda.
Serviendum et laetandum.
Scrupulis obsistendum.'

DR. JOHNSON.

THE THEOLOGY OF THE GOSPELS

BY

JAMES MOFFATT, D.D., D. LITT.

YATES PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT GREEK AND EXEGESIS
MANSFIELD COLLEGE, OXFORD

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TO

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PREFACE

THE bulk of the following pages formed the substance of a course of lectures which I had the honour of delivering under the Alexander Robertson Trust in the University of Glasgow, during January and February of this year. In working over the materials afresh for the purpose of publication I have made considerable additions to the argument at various points, but, even so, the volume is not a classified survey of the various theological and religious conceptions which may be found within the compass of the gospels. My aim has been different. What these pages attempt to do is to present a study of the central and salient features in the theology of the gospels, taking theology in its stricter rather than in its wider sense. The standpoint for estimating the characteristic position of the gospels in the development of primitive Christian reflection is determined by the message and personality of Jesus. The gospels voice the faith of Jesus Christ in different keys, but the theme of their fugue-like variations is never forgotten amid all their windings, and it ought to be dominant in any study of their symphonies. Angelology and almsgiving, for example, enter into the religious scope of the gospels, but such notes only sound in relation to the controlling theme which uses them in its larger chords.

When Paul spoke to the Athenians, he took his

ment theology provides some account of the Jewish presuppositions and environment of Jesus, then an outline of His teaching on the basis of what are considered to be the authentic materials extant in the synoptic sources or traditions, thirdly an appreciation of the apostolic theology which has blended with the preaching of Jesus in the records, and finally, a special section on the Fourth gospel which discriminates the characteristic theology of that writing from the synoptic tradition, on the one hand, and Paulinism upon the other, with an attempt, depending for its positive results upon the author's critical position, to distinguish what (if any) are the authentic sayings and thoughts of Jesus which may be embedded in the Johannine interpretation. It is a method of procedure which has its own advantages, but I have no intention of handling the materials on such lines. This is not a handbook to the gospels, nor a study of the teaching of Jesus, nor an outline of Christian dogma. The following pages contain no more than a group of studies, and they are grouped in order to be as far as possible genetic and compact. Whether this attempt to reset the salient data is pronounced successful or not, I am convinced that it is more suitable to the plan of the present series than the conventional arrangement of the text-books. The index at the end of the volume and the outline of contents prefixed to each chapter, will enable the reader to find any topic or passage without loss of time.

JAMES MOFFATT.

OXFORD, *July* 1, 1912.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

THE GOSPELS AND THEIR THEOLOGY, ... 1

Instinctive objection to the association of theology and the gospels.
Various reasons for this feeling.
In what sense theology is organic to the gospels.
Different senses in which the four gospels are theological.
The problem of tendency and interpretation:

(i) Practical.
(ii) Speculative.

Further problems:

(*a*) Is there a theology of the gospels as distinct from the rest of the New Testament?
The relation of Paulinism to the gospels.
(*b*) Is the theology of the gospels a unity? The synoptic gospels and the Fourth.
(*c*) Is the canonical text of the gospels free from later doctrinal modification?
(*d*) Was the theology of the gospels affected by the passage from Aramaic into Greek?

The common element in the theology of the gospels.
Distinctive features of the gospels as gospels.
Specific character of their 'theology.

CHAPTER II

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE GOSPELS, ... 41

How far is the theology an eschatology?
Recent research into this question.

PAGE

The problem synoptic rather than Johannine.
Definition of apocalyptic element, in view of—

(*a*) Sayings which involve that the 'kingdom' was in a sense present, as well as future, for Jesus.

(*b*) Significance of prayer, in this connection.

(*c*) Significance of the ethical teaching of Jesus, in relation to his eschatology.

Meaning of the 'kingdom,' present and future; the antinomy presented by the evidence of the gospels on this point.

Solutions of the antinomy:—

(i) The influence of the apostolic church. The 'tendency' solution.

(ii) Varying emphasis on eschatology at different periods in the life of Jesus. The 'biographical' solution.

(iii) Element of pictorial language in the teaching of Jesus. The 'literary' solution.

Transmutation of eschatology by Jesus.

CHAPTER III

THE GOD OF JESUS, ... 85

Practical interests of the teaching of Jesus about God:

(*a*) The Fatherhood and providence.
Not a justification of idleness or recklessness.

(*b*) The Fatherhood and the kingdom.
Relation to the divine purpose.

(*c*) Relation to the miracles.
God and nature.

The transcendental and the immanent God.
The divine presence mediated through Christ.
Jesus and current Jewish titles of God.
His avoidance of the term 'Holy,' and its significance.
The 'righteousness' of God as the Father, involving love.

Further implications of this:

(i) The self-sacrifice of the divine love.

(ii) Unique manifestation of this in the person an vocation of the Son.

PAGE

(iii) The relation of the Father to human sin.

(iv) The severity and majesty of God as Father. The function of the Son in the Father's order of judgment, penitence, and forgiveness.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERSON OF JESUS, ... 127

The coming of Jesus an epoch.
Significance of his personality in the light of

(*a*) His divine sonship:
Development of the tradition, through the birth-stories to the Fourth gospel.

(*b*) The 'Servant of Yahveh' prophecies:
Directions of this influence.

(*c*) The 'Son of man' tradition:
Linguistic problem connected with this title.
Synoptic data and their significance.

(*d*) The 'Son of David' title.

(*e*) The 'Beloved' as a messianic title.

(*f*) The 'Lord' as a divine title.

(*g*) The synoptic category of 'Wisdom.

(*h*) The Johannine category of the Logos.

Belief in Jesus as the Christ: inner development.
The common elements of the christology of the first three gospels and the Fourth.
Summary.

CHAPTER V

THE SPIRIT OF JESUS, ... 177

Meaning of the 'Spirit' in connection with Jesus.
Only two references in his teaching:

(i) The Holy Spirit and his own vocation.

(ii) The Spirit in the witness of the disciples before hostile tribunals.

PAGE

When did Jesus impart the Spirit to the disciples?
View of the Fourth gospel.
Development of the conception in the Fourth gospel:

(*a*) The Paraclete.
(*b*) The Spirit of truth.
(*c*) In relation to baptism.
(*d*) In relation to the Lord's Supper.
(*e*) In relation to the person of Christ.

The synoptic and the Johannine views.
Conclusion.

BIBLIOGRAPHY, ... 211

INDEX, ... 215

THE THEOLOGY OF THE GOSPELS

CHAPTER I

THE GOSPELS AND THEIR THEOLOGY

'THE theology of the gospels!' some will exclaim in dismay, 'and we verily thought the gospels were a refuge from theology!' This is an attitude towards the religion of Jesus Christ and its records with which it is often impossible not to feel a certain sympathy. To be deep in the history of the church, and especially of its creeds, is for many just persons to acquire a more or less legitimate suspicion of theology in connection with the vital religion which breathes upon them as they turn back to the simple pages of the gospels. They know, or think they know, what theology has been and done; in a number of cases its services to Christianity seem to have been accompanied by results which are irrelevant, if not positively injurious, to such faith in the living Christ as the gospels commend; its associations have been so generally with intellectualism and formalism, with a stereotyped presentation of the Christian religion in the phraseology and categories of some philosophical system, which rapidly became a source of embarrassment to ordinary people, that it is not altogether surprising to catch a persistent sense of relief in the popular conviction that the

gospels at any rate leave no room for the intrusion of theology, and at the same time to detect a corresponding sense of resentment when that conviction is challenged or modified. Nearly forty years ago a German critic published a rather bitter and despairing monograph upon what he called *Die Christlichkeit der heutigen Theologie*.[1] His thesis was that theology had invariably played the traitor to Christianity, that no theology could be called Christian, and that theology had, in fact, destroyed the Christian religion. The spirit of this protest is shared by many who would not agree with its arguments or objects. So far as the New Testament is concerned, they would be perfectly willing to let Paul's theology go, but they would claim the gospels as documents of religion and not of theology, documents of the faith in its pure, pre-theological phase. Theology is the theory of a religion; it stands to personal faith as the theory of æsthetics stands to poetry, as botany to life in the field or garden. Theology is listening to what man has to say about God; personal religion, on the other hand, is man listening to God, and this is what the gospels mean. To speak of 'the theology of the gospels' is a contradiction in terms.

Nevertheless, it is reasonable to speak of the theology of the gospels. There is theology behind even their most spontaneous pages, and they do not cease on that account to be gospels. We may even add, it is because they mirror an experience which tends to become conscious of its issues in history and nature, that they are gospels.

[1] A second edition of F. Overbeck's essay (1879) was issued in 1903.

The reluctance to admit this is based upon an antipathy to theology in general, which is not unintelligible, and which is by no means confined to the place of the unlearned. Theologies have tended to insist upon the acceptance of doctrines as if they possessed some virtue in themselves which enabled them to become practically a substitute for the life of personal experience which they interpret. Is it so with the theology of the gospels? Upon the contrary, the reverse is the case. Such a tendency may be felt, it is true, within the theology of the Fourth gospel, but the motto for all the four gospels might be found not unfairly in the words used by the writer of the Fourth to define his purpose: *These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his Name.*[1] They are interpretations of Christ, written from faith and for faith, in order to inspire and instruct Christian life within the churches; they are not documents which interpose doctrines between the soul and Jesus. From one point of view it is hardly adequate or even accurate to speak about 'the testimony' of the gospels. That phrase suggests a subject or person who is in need of testimony, whose character and claims require to be authenticated before a suspicious and uncertain audience. Now, it is true that there is an apologetic element in the gospels which corresponds to this idea. They are written in several instances with a view to objections felt by the Jewish, Jewish-Christian, or Greek world of the day; there was the Jewish faith with an uncrucified messiah, for example, and the

[1] John xx. 1.

Greek with no messiah at all. But fundamentally their audience is one of those who believe already, and the doubts and uncertainties which they essay to remove are occasioned by the relation of human faith to Christ. Their best apologetic is the positive confession of their faith. So far as they introduce doctrines, it is to confirm that faith by drawing out its basis in the person of Christ, and by thus proving it is more than a pious intuition. The underlying principle is that personal belief in Christ carries with it convictions of His relation to God and the world which are organic to the religious experience. Even their theology, such as it is, may be said to be implicit rather than explicit, for the most part, until we come to the Fourth gospel, where a special interpretation of the person of Christ, semi-philosophic, semi-mystical, lies on the surface of the record as well as of the prologue. In the synoptic gospels what we see are beliefs in action, or actions which involve certain beliefs. Jesus does not teach any *summa theologiae*. He acts for God and teaches about God with an underived note of authority. His presence sets in motion a common life which is determined by His revelation of God's character and purpose, and the churches in which and for which the gospels were written were not schools of theology, but communities organised for the worship of God and the service of His kingdom in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, the most elementary and spontaneous experience of the Christian religion, then as now, involved what may be termed without inaccuracy dogmatic or theological conceptions. When Paul reminded the Christians of Corinth that the first principles of their faith included a

belief that Christ had died for their sins according to the scriptures of the Old Testament, he was not expressing a Pauline theologumenon, but a belief without which there would have been no Christianity at all. It is difficult even for the simple piety which with a sure instinct finds its way to the direct and vital passages of revelation in the gospels, to ignore the fact that the religion of Jesus does involve a theology of some kind.[1] It meets us on the very threshold of Matthew and Luke, to say nothing of John.[2] Even in what is sometimes regarded as the most human and realistic of the gospels the reader comes upon a divine voice and vision at the baptism, the personality of Satan, and the environment of unclean spirits in disease, before he reaches the end of the first chapter in Mark. Something has to be made of all this. We must come to terms with the problems started by designations like *The Son of God*, *the Son of man*, *the Logos*, and *the Spirit*. Whether these are retained or dropped, in either case there is a pronouncement upon Jesus and early Christianity which has to justify itself before the criticism of the records and the larger criticism of the Christian consciousness.

There is also a natural impatience and suspicion of theology not only as irrelevant if not injurious to the Christian heart, but as an invasion of the rights which belong to the mind. Christian theology has sometimes been presented in ways which threaten

[1] 'The word "God" is a Theology in itself' (Newman, *The Idea of a University*, p. 26).

[2] A theology implies a philosophy, in the sense that it presupposes some theory of knowledge and therefore of personality. The Fourth gospel, from this point of view, has a much more articulate theology than its predecessors.

to foreclose the inquiry and activity of thought by elevating the phraseology of some particular age to a position of finality. How does the study of the theology of the gospels bear upon this objection? In the first instance, it reveals a rich and flexible variety of conceptions which proves that the primitive church was not committed to any stereotyped theory of the person of Christ in relation to God and the world. In the second instance, the gospels afford a standard and a spirit for that revision and re-adjustment of Christian theology which is from time to time the duty of the living Church. The gospels are a refuge from theologies which have ceased to represent the Christian experience with adequate fulness and accuracy. But they are not a refuge from theology, except when theology either lifts some transient element to a position of primacy or imposes upon the gospels the schemes of a later fashion in philosophy.

The former danger is always with us. The theology of the gospels, like the theology of any age or movement, is related to the contemporary conceptions of the world and of God; it is moulded and coloured by current ideas of nature and the supernatural, otherwise it would have been unintelligible and ineffective for its period. But it embodies classic and fundamental elements to which these are not essential, and for which fresh expressions can be found, more consonant with the advance of knowledge and experience. This means more than the fact of current cosmic and psychological beliefs entering into the minds of those who transmitted the tradition of Jesus; it means that they formed part of the religious world of Jesus Himself. The

theology of Christianity is not simply a transcript of everything that Jesus thought and said about the world. There are elements even in His teaching, *e.g.* on demonology and eschatology, which have not passed over into our world. The Fourth gospel, with its characteristic attitude of reticence to both of these elements, is enough to show that they are not vital to the fundamental beliefs of Christianity, and that they may be dropped or modified without loss to the faith. The varying emphasis of even the synoptic gospels upon certain aspects of the person of Jesus indicates that the theology of the gospels was already conscious of the problem which vexes modern theology with regard to the christological issue, and that it anticipates the lines along which that problem is to be met.

The second of the two dangers which have been just mentioned is equally perennial. There is a vivid expression of it in one of Pascal's private letters to a novice of Port-Royal.[1] He quotes from Mark xiii. 14-15: *When you see the abominable thing in the place where it ought not to be, then let no one turn back to his house to take anything away.* 'Mais cette parole est étonnante. Il me semble que cela prédit parfaitement le temps où nous sommes, où la corruption de la morale est aux maisons de sainteté, et dans les livres des théologiens et des religieux où elle ne devrait pas être.' The whole chapter seems to him a prediction of the contemporary degradation of the Christian religion in the Roman church and in the French world alike. 'Ce chapitre de l'Évangile, que je voudrais lire avec vous tout entier, finit par une exhortation à veiller et à prier

[1] *Pensées de Pascal* (éd. Havet), ii. pp. 341-2.

pour éviter tous ces malheurs, et en effet il est bien juste que la prière soit continuelle quand le péril est continuel.' If Pascal's suspicion of theology was justified in the seventeenth century, it has been more than justified since then, outside as well as inside the church of Rome. It has prompted the movement 'Back to Christ' from the formulas and speculations which had usurped the place of Jesus in the minds of His people, or, in Lessing's neat antithesis, from the Christian religion to the religion of Christ. One drawback to this movement has been that in casting back to Christ, or rather to the Jesus of history, moderns have often taken back a Christ of their own creation, a conception of Jesus which is tacitly read into the gospels. And this error is bound up with another, with the failure to see that the very contact with the Jesus of the gospels involves a theological reconstruction[1]—a reconstruction, doubtless, in which the fundamental and vital factor is the life of Christ, not any doctrine about His person, but still a reconstruction which calls out the thoughts of faith, 'thoughts of things which,' in Sir Thomas Browne's phrase, 'thoughts but tenderly touch.'

From the standpoint of modern theology[2] Christocentric views may be as logically superseded

[1] In the sense that Christianity cannot remain a religion of intuitions, without reflection upon its relation to life and nature. Cf. Caird's *Evolution of Theology in the Greek Philosophers*, i. 6 f. ('It has never been, and can never be, a religion of simple faith; or, if it ever relapses into such a faith, it immediately begins to lose its spiritual character, and to assimilate itself to religions that are lower in the scale').

[2] Cf. Troeltsch, *Die Bedeutung der Geschichtlichkeit Jesu für den Glauben*, 1911, pp. 15 f.

as geocentric conceptions in cosmology or anthropocentric ideas in metaphysics, but the theology of the gospels represents the religious interpretations and experiences of men within the apostolic church for whom the world had been transformed by the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, and to whom the worship and service of God had become a new reality through the Spirit of the Lord. The data and materials of this theology lie in the divine revelation made through Jesus Christ. It is the character and purpose of Christ, His personality, His disclosure of the divine nature in word and deed, the experiences to which His Spirit gave rise—it is these that form the staple of any theology which we find within the gospels.[1] Its subject and object is faith as a moral decision evoked by the call and claim of Jesus as God's Son. A theologian ought therefore to feel at home in the study of the gospels, not because he can forget for a little that he is a

[1] To the age in which the gospel traditions arose the Old Testament was a rich source of proof for the Christian attitude to Judaism, Jesus, and the future. The evangelists drew upon it as a Christian book, inspired by the Spirit of God, and their use of it went much further than the appeal to prophecies of Christ. But (i) Jesus Himself drew upon the deeper ideals and prophecies, and (ii) the attempt to explain large sections of the gospel narratives and fundamental conceptions of Christ's teaching as no more than the reproduction of Old Testament passages does not carry us very far. Tertullian's 'Lex radix evangelii' is an epigram rather than a historical estimate, and as for the narratives, Wellhausen's comment (on Mark iv. 38) holds good: 'This story is not the echo of the story of Jonah. It is rarely the case that the gospel stories owe their origin to Old Testament prototypes. . . . What was known and handed down about Jesus really did not agree with what the Old Testament contained about the messiah and what the Jews expected of him; it was only with difficulty that one could show how the contradictions disappeared before the eyes of the enlightened.'

theologian, but because he is breathing in their pages an atmosphere charged with the fresh experiences and intuitions which are essential to any theology which deserves the name of Christian.[1] He will first of all put himself into their attitude towards Jesus Christ, not because that involves the adoption of a first-century view of the world, but because it is a religious attitude which is determined by the Spirit of the Lord within the Church. Before we can safely reason from the gospels we have to share their position towards the great personality behind and above them. No inferences from their contents are valid apart from a sense of the redeeming facts and truths which inspire them, and which are larger than any contemporary elements in the records or in the historical setting which they presuppose. The amount of relativity in the theology of the gospels only looks formidable when they are approached along the avenue of mechanical preconceptions or hyper-sceptical prejudices.

M. Anatole France quotes the defiant retort of a modern Frenchman, M. Charles Maurras, when some one cited against him a saying from the gospels: 'Je ne me soucie pas de savoir ce que quatre Juifs obscurs ont pensé de Jésus-Christ!'[2] The authors of the gospels were obscure; at least, their personalities are obscure to us at the present day, with the exception of Luke. But some of the greatest truths of religion have come from the pen of anonymous writers; the gospels in this respect are on the same plane as the larger part of the Old

[1] Cf. Father Tyrrell's *Mediævalism*, p. 129.
[2] In *The English Review* (April 1910), p. 45.

Testament. Besides, to reflect a theology is not the same thing as to be a theologian. Nor do the gospels represent three or four writers each of whom is engaged in reproducing a conception of Christ from his devout ego; what they voice is the common faith as it was held in various circles of the apostolic church, and this common faith rests upon the thoughts of Jesus Christ, upon His convictions of God, His judgments of men, His attitude to the world. Through the idealisation of the records, through their tacit corrections and avowed predilections, through categories which are only partially adequate, through misconceptions and exaggerations, through the refraction of contemporary interests and preoccupations, a theology shines which is not wholly obscure, and through the theology a Figure which is still less obscure.

It is important to keep in view the range and organic character of these variations in the development of the theology of the gospels. The climax of the Fourth gospel is the appeal of the risen Christ: *Be not faithless but believing*, and the reply of Thomas (the last words addressed to Christ by a disciple) expresses the end at which the writer conceives faith will arrive under the growing revelation of God in Christ: *My Lord and my God.* What the theology of the gospels mirrors is the process, or rather the processes, of experience and reflection which ripened faith into this fundamental conviction of the Church. The Fourth gospel puts back into the life and teaching of Jesus on earth convictions and experiences of His spiritual significance which only dawned in their fulness upon the Church after the resurrection. This is a source of endless perplexity to the

historical critic. It is not a feature which is wholly absent even from the synoptic gospels, but the extent to which it prevails in the Fourth gospel constitutes a problem by itself. The *plus* of preaching, which enters into the synoptic record as a product of the early church's testimony, becomes in the Fourth gospel at several points a surplus of religious and theological reflection, which often obscures and sometimes resets the historical outlines of the ministry and teaching of Jesus as these can be unravelled in the sources of the first three gospels. But the theological continuity between the Fourth gospel and its predecessors is not so difficult to trace once the former is regarded as primarily an interpretation of faith in the historical manner.

The theology of Mark, for example, is not a description of how a genial humanitarian Jesus went about doing good, unconscious of any specific divine functions. Mark's gospel is the story of Jesus as a supernatural figure, compelling homage from the invisible world of demons, and exercising the powers of divine forgiveness and authority on earth as Son of God and Son of man. Mark, as Wellhausen observes, is not writing *de vita et moribus Jesu*. He essays indeed to make His personality vivid, but that personality has a divine vocation which supplies the controlling interest of the story: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. In this respect the Christology of Mark is not so distant from the essential features even of the Fourth gospel. It is possible to feel this affinity, apart from the special argument of J. Weiss (*Das älteste Evangelium*, pp. 97 f.), that Mark's use of the titles 'Son of man' and 'Son of God' proves his acceptance of the Pauline idea of

Jesus as a Man descended from heaven. Mark, like Paul and the author of the Fourth gospel, does not explain how the divine being took flesh; in this respect his christology is less developed than that of Matthew or Luke, but the fundamental conception of the person of Christ is already present in his gospel, and present as the dominant feature of the story.

Matthew's theology is at once more precisely messianic and more definitely Christian—in the sense that Jesus as the Son of God is more than messiah. As the Son of the Father and as the Lord of men, He occupies a place which does not depend on any arguments from prophecy. Faith in Him is made more explicit. Some of the most perplexing antinomies in Matthew's gospel spring out of the juxtaposition of sayings which imply a long perspective for the kingdom and eschatological predictions of the most pronounced type, of Jewish-Christian sections and catholic aperçus; there is also a noticeable reserve in the use of the exorcism traditions, which bulk so largely in the Marcan estimate. But it is in the sphere of ethics rather than of theology proper that Matthew's gospel differs from that of his predecessor.[1] The theological characteristics are also due in the main to the rabbinic methods of the author, which tend to present the christology in a less naïve and popular form than Mark's narrative.

[1] The author has a twofold object in view: to explain to Jewish Christians how God's kingdom, which Jesus had inaugurated, was so different from the traditional theocracy of expectation, and to reassure Gentile Christians who were perplexed by its apparent limitation to Israel. See B. Weiss, *Die Quellen der Synoptischen Ueberlieferung*, pp. 234 f.

Luke's theology is as catholic as Matthew's in spirit and more so in expression. The wider relation of Jesus to humanity shimmers through the Jewish environment. He is the son of Adam, not of Abraham or David, in the genealogy, and as the Son of God He occupies a place which is more intelligible than Matthew or even Mark represents, to non-Jewish readers. In the accounts of the resurrection Luke is distinctly realistic; more than once there is a materialising of the story, which contrasts with Matthew. But the theological estimate, even with its increasing emphasis on the Spirit, is essentially true to that of his predecessors, while in several respects it forms a development in the direction of the Fourth gospel. Keim insists that metaphysics are beginning already to attach themselves to the personality of Jesus; so far as this means that Jesus is not ceasing to occupy a unique position towards God even while the messianic character is becoming a less important category, it is accurate.

There are varieties of interpretation here, which evince a certain maturing of faith, but they are neither casual nor irresponsible. A survey of such variations is apt to leave the impression that the theological aspect of the tradition, if not the historical, is due mainly if not entirely to speculative interests operating within a world of heterogeneous messianic and Hellenic ideas about the Son of God. It is necessary therefore to recollect two facts: in the first place, that these interpretations of Jesus as the Christ arose from the instinctive desire to represent, in terms of current thought, the person of One whom the churches worshipped as their Lord; and in the second place, that this desire was also

motived repeatedly by practical exigencies. The former aspect is more generally recognised than the second, but both need to be considered fairly in order to appreciate the genesis of the theology of the gospels. The ætiological motive led to the preservation and the shaping of traditions about the rites and laws and future of the society which owed its origin to the faith of Jesus. The apologetic aspect of that motive, as in the case of Matthew and the Fourth gospel especially, sharpened interest in the anti-Jewish or rather anti-Pharisaic attitude of Jesus. Finally, the internal controversies of the early church, especially the trouble over the Law, inevitably affected the christology, and started fresh attempts to present in historical form the relation of Jesus to Israel and to the world outside Israel. In addition to all this, there was the influence of contemporary history, which must have affected in particular the tradition of the eschatological sayings. 'The transmission of sayings as to the future, and the actual unfolding of that future, went on side by side. It seems inevitable that the latter should affect the former.'[1] All this does not rule out tendency, conscious as well as unconscious, from the gospels. What it does is to emphasise the practical, religious motive in many of the modifications which the tradition presents, and to bring out the fact that such variations were not idiosyncrasies of the authors. They point back not to four obscure Jews but to what may be termed communal instincts — communal instincts which ultimately rest upon an inherent belief in Jesus as the Christ. A study of the gospels from the

[1] H. B. Sharman, *The Teaching of Jesus about the Future*, p. 138.

historical or from the literary standpoint would require to estimate the genesis and growth of such tendencies, to assign the midrashic element its proper value, and to distinguish the sections where some religious idea is presented in historical form, where a miracle has grown out of a parable or a religious belief in the course of tradition, for example, or where some incident is symbolic. The theological appreciation of the gospels cannot entirely dispense with such methods of treatment, but its primary concern is with what the writers believed about Jesus rather than with the exact forms in which they happened to express that belief. No doubt, it is the beliefs which have sometimes created the history. But the beliefs, however naïvely expressed, were not floating in the air; they are organic to the substantial faith without which there would not have been any gospels at all, and that faith was not created by any crisis, practical or speculative, through which the primitive church had to pass. The theology of the gospels has been shaped by the exigencies and experiences of the apostolic age, but it was not their simple product. In one aspect, it is the reflection of the very faith which enabled the early Christians to be Christians. In another aspect, it suggests that the creative genius of the Founder is not to be overlooked in estimating the records drawn up by His adherents. When the gospels contain sayings which appear to suit some crisis or situation in the apostolic age, it does not necessarily follow that they arose from that period or have been shaped to harmonise with it. Tendency in the church was not more creative than Jesus. 'Of course, there are numerous instances of hysteron-

proteron in the gospels—the merest suggestion of practical aim or purpose leads to a hysteron-proteron, and the gospels follow practical aims—yet it by no means follows that saying after saying must have been coloured and corrected in accordance with the circumstances of later times.'[1] This is a sound canon. It applies particularly to the references to persecution, but it has a wider range, and it must be allowed to qualify any inferences that may be drawn as to the presence and extent of tendency in the recorded speeches of Jesus throughout the synoptic tradition.

At the same time, there is a speculative background to the theology of the gospels. There were christologies, messianic[2] and in a sense Hellenic, before the gospels, before even Christianity, and the special views of the gospels are sometimes expressed either in terms of these or with a more or less conscious reference to them. It is necessary, however, for our present purpose to restrict the theology of the gospels to the religious ideas of Jesus and the evangelists, so far as they were conscious of their range and origin. There is a misty hinterland behind conceptions like the Son of man, the Logos, the incarnation, and the last judgment, which involves researches into comparative religion beyond the pale of Judaism. All such conceptions we shall take as they were used by Jesus

[1] Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus*, p. 204.

[2] The interpretation of the Old Testament, allegorical and otherwise, depends on the principle that Christ was the end of the divine revelation in Judaism, and that the law and the prophets were therefore to be read in the light of the end. The theology of the gospels contains, amid its uses of the Old Testament, a substantially correct estimate of the preceding literature of Judaism; it is employed to illustrate rather than to prove the Christian belief in Jesus.

and the authors of the gospels, without discussing *e.g.* the rise of the animistic view which lies behind the faith in demons and angels and the Spirit, or even the relation between the Oriental avatar idea and the Fourth gospel's christology. Still further, it is irrelevant to the central problems of the theology of the gospels to enter into detailed discussion of the affinities between Pharisaic Judaism and the religion of Jesus, or to give explicit résumés of the difference between His teaching and contemporary scribism. It is sufficient to keep the latter before one's mind. The relation of Jesus to the Law, for example, is an outcome of His consciousness as messiah, and in these pages it is noticed simply from that standpoint; otherwise it falls under the category of His ethical praxis rather than of His theology. The latter is concerned with the inner principles of His religion, which determined the course of His career and His attitude to questions like those of divorce, the sabbath, and the temple.

The theology of the gospels was a cause as well as an effect, however. It marks the rise of a creative genius on the soil of Judaism, and it entered into the history of the Christian Church. To understand the gospels we ought to study their influence as well as their environment and origin, and in a manual of New Testament theology or a history of dogma this consideration is borne in mind. Here space forbids more than a glance at the most important movement in the theology of the period, namely, the religious system of Paul. The relation between this and the gospels is one of interaction. It is now recognised that the tendency to minimise Paul's interest in and acquaintance with the life of

Jesus has been carried beyond what the data of his epistles warrant. In that sense, the primitive tradition of Jesus which underlies the synoptic gospels had an effect on Paulinism. Jesus was something more to Paul than a figure round which a floating christology crystallised. But the theology of the gospels is not the theology of Paul; the sources of the synoptic writings, Mark in its primitive form and Q, cannot be dated earlier than the Pauline movement, and it is the effect of Paulinism upon the gospels, not vice versa, which has to be considered.

(*a*) This raises the first of the preliminary problems regarding the critical use of the gospels for the purpose of ascertaining their theology: Is there a theology of the gospels apart from the rest of the New Testament? Were they merely transcripts of the teaching of Jesus, upon which the epistles were comments, it would be at once possible to answer such a question in the affirmative. But the gospels are products of the apostolic age, and their origin is significant for any appreciation of their contents. It is impracticable, on the other hand, to treat them as no more than products of the apostolic faith, uncontrolled by any definite gospel of Jesus behind them. What the theologian has to do is to determine the extent to which the tendencies and interests of the primitive church affected the tradition at any given point, and this involves intricate questions of historical and literary criticism, many of which are still unanswered. There is the problem of the parables, for example. How far has the conception of the Church moulded the conception of the Reign in the parabolic traditions of

Matthew and even of Mark? Have later associations of the Church been carried over into the primitive words of Jesus upon the Reign of God in more parables than those of the drag-net and the tares? Or has the hypothesis of the equivalence of Church and Kingdom in Paul been exaggerated? Again, is a section like Mark viii. 27-x. 45 (as Bacon and Wellhausen independently argue) substantially a projection of later Christian views into the original tradition, an unhistorical expansion of the Christian *credo* that the Christ must suffer? Here also, we may suspect, there is exaggeration. The occurrence of several logia in the passage which are vouched for by Q, and the presence of undoubtedly historical incidents in the narrative, help to confirm the impression that this section on the Christ and the cross is not out of keeping in the main with the situation of Jesus and His disciples. Similarly it is impossible to regard the predictions of the resurrection or the declarations of the messianic vocation as purely apostolic; without some basis in the teaching and life of Jesus their form and existence in the tradition are not explicable. Thus the term *Son of man*, in its messianic sense, is not wholly due to the pious reverence of the early Christians, who were responsible for attaching divine significance to a name which in the original Aramaic upon the lips of Jesus meant no more than 'man' or 'some one,' or a self-designation. This we shall see later on. Meantime it is enough to point out that such problems meet the theologian as he proceeds to use the gospels for his special purposes, and that they forbid us to take the documents either as pure products of tendency

or as uncoloured transcripts of some original and authoritative teaching. Before any one of them was written Paul had thought and taught. It is true that the theology of the early church embraced a variety of types which cannot be reduced to Jewish and Gentile Christianity respectively, much less to the influence of the great apostle; but he was the first theologian of the Church, his letters present a fairly clear outline of his views, and his influence therefore has to be taken primarily into account as a factor in the evolution of the religious conceptions which the four gospels voice, in so far as these cannot be traced back with certainty to the teaching of Jesus Himself.

With regard to the Fourth gospel, the relation is comparatively clear. By the time it was composed the great Pauline struggle with the Jewish Christians had been long since fought and won. The writer practically assumes the freedom of Christians from the Law—*while the Law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ*,— the world-wide range of Christ's mission, and the supersession of Judaism as a religious system. In its christology, as well as in its conceptions of the Spirit, of the union between the believer and Christ, of freedom, of glory, and even of faith, the Fourth gospel bears ample traces of the Pauline theology. In almost every instance the writer has modified or expanded what he has taken over; his theology is not simply a development of Paulinism, but Paulinism is one of its most important presuppositions. 'Upon one side, we may characterise what is essential and original in the Johannine view by saying that it represents a synthesis of the primitive apostolic

tradition with Paulinism,'[1] although we must add that some conceptions which are apparently due to the latter may have been anticipated in the former or elsewhere.

The problem of the relation of Paulinism to the synoptic gospels comes to a head in the criticism of Mark, where one critic alleges that to understand Mark the reader must forget all about Paulinism,[2] while others only differ in the extent to which they assign the operation of Pauline influences upon the narrative and teaching of the gospel. Once or twice there are water-marks of the evangelist's Pauline environment, for example in the connotation of the term *gospel*, in the determinism of the parabolic theory (iv. 10-12), which is upon the whole more likely to have come from the Pauline view of Israel's rejection than from any eschatological theory upon the part of Jesus, and also in the symbolic allusion to the rending of the veil of the temple. But the characteristic features of the gospel hardly show any impact of conscious or radical Paulinism; the universalism *e.g.* is prophetic rather than Pauline; and the use of non-Pauline terms like *the Son of man* proves that the author adhered to the primitive tradition rather than to the Pauline soteriology. I share the opinion of those who

[1] A. Titius, *Die Johanneische Anschauung unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Seligkeit*, p. 2.

[2] Wernle, *Die Synoptische Frage*, pp. 199 f. 'The specific features of Paulinism are entirely absent from Mark. . . . The Christology contradicts that of Paul in almost every point.' This position is more easily held by those who, like Wernle, still believe in a Petrine tradition behind Mark. The best examination of the problem is by the great French critic Lagrange in his edition of Mark (pp. cxl.-cl.).

conclude that the so-called Paulinism of Mark does not amount to very much after all.[1] The gospel is in the main undogmatic; so far as it is dogmatic it is not specifically Pauline.

As for Q, it is generally recognised that, so far as its characteristic features can be made out, it was not stamped with Paulinism. The Palestinian circles in which it originated represented a type of primitive theology which in all likelihood lay outside the direct influence of the apostle's teaching. The character of Matthew's gospel, with the Jewish-Christian tinge of certain strata, naturally marks it off from Paulinism; as a matter of fact, it is anti-Pauline tendency which is usually discovered[2] in this gospel by those who bring it into any relation to the apostle. Luke's friendship with Paul places his work in a different category. The narrative of the Lord's Supper, for example (even in its shorter form), and the occasional use of Pauline phrases and terms (*e.g.* in xxi. 34-6), betray the writer's affinity with Paulinism, but the remarkable thing is that there are so few specifically Pauline ideas wrought into the texture of a gospel whose author stood within the Pauline circle. The atmosphere of the primitive church can be felt; 'Paulinism' as a doctrine of the person of Jesus Christ is con-

[1] Cf. Menzies, *The Earliest Gospel*, p. 39.

[2] Imagined, sometimes. Thus Professor Bacon (*Beginnings of Gospel Story*, p. 132) comments severely upon Matthew's version of Christ's answer to the rich young ruler: to make obedience to the commandments the condition of entrance into life eternal, he declares, is 'a photographic revelation of that Jewish-Christian legalism against which Paul brought to bear all the powers of his logic and of his life.' Who wrote, *Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God*?

spicuously absent. A scrutiny of the very passages where Pauline influence is most likely to have been present discloses the fact that 'Luke has not appropriated any specific doctrine of Paul, but only made his own in all their generality the gains of the great apostle's life-work—freedom from the law, and the assurance that salvation is open to all.'[1] There are occasional traces of Pauline language as well as thought, *e.g.* in viii. 12, x. 8 (cf. 1 Cor. x. 27), and xx. 38 (=Rom. vi. 10, xiv. 7-8), but Luke could be a friend of Paul without sharing his specific theology, and an analysis of the Third gospel turns the 'could be' into 'was.'

(*b*) The foregoing discussion has already opened up a further query: Is it feasible, and if so in what sense, to speak about a theology of *the four* gospels? Even the three synoptic gospels have their special characteristics, and then there is the familiar problem of the differences between the general synoptic theology and the Johannine.

As for the former problem, the exhaustive and ntricate processes of synoptic criticism are apt to engross us till we forget to view

> 'The parts
> As parts, but with a feeling of the whole.'

Important as their characteristics are for the study of primitive religion in the apostolic churches, their common characteristic is more important still. We raise questions, more or less vital, about the gospels, but the gospels have only one question to put to us: *What think ye of Christ?*—and they put

[1] Schmiedel, *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, p. 1841.

it, sure of what the answer ought to be. No amount of discrepancies and idiosyncrasies should be allowed to obscure this predominating interest, especially as all three have a close literary connection. Besides some special sources which underlie the First and the Third gospels respectively, Mark's gospel, either in its present form or in an earlier shape, has been employed by Matthew and Luke, both of whom also seem to have drawn, in different ways, upon an earlier collection of the sayings of Jesus, to which the convenient term Q is usually applied. Critics are still divided upon the question whether Mark used Q, or vice versa, or even whether there was any literary connection between them. For the purpose of discovering the theology of the gospels, however, such points are of subordinate importance. It would be more relevant if we could be sure of the precise contents and therefore of the theological colour of Q, particularly in relation to the apocalyptic eschatology. But even this is still uncertain. What is certain, as we have already seen, is that the tendency to magnify the person of Jesus Christ, which is the characteristic feature of the Fourth gospel, is already present in the synoptic tradition from the first. It is well marked in the structure of Matthew and Luke even as compared with the earlier Mark. The most casual reader can hardly miss alterations in one or both of the later synoptic gospels which were plainly due to the growing reverence for Jesus as the Christ. Not only is there a disposition, as it has been said, to spare the twelve—to soften one or two sayings and incidents which appeared to reflect upon the memory and reputation of the

Church's early leaders—and, on the other hand, to bring their importance into more relief, but the religious value of Jesus to the Church appears to have operated to some extent in the direction of toning down expressions which seemed too frankly human, and of altering others in order to convey an impression of Christ's person more consonant with the *pietas* of the apostolic church. Thus both Matthew and Luke suppress the flash of anger which Jesus showed in the synagogue at Capernaum (Mark iii. 5), and His indignation, later on, at the disciples who tried to prevent the mothers from bringing their children for a blessing (Mark x. 14). There are repeated instances of this tendency, but such phenomena are neither numerous nor important enough to justify the hypothesis that the synoptic gospels represent a gradual apotheosis of Jesus in the faith of the early church. Whether we postulate an earlier form of Mark or not, both of the main traditions or sources which underlie the synoptic gospels attest a primitive belief in Jesus as the Christ; they presuppose a confession of faith which reaches back prior to Paul, and the essential characteristics of their christology point to their independence of the contemporary Pauline theology. To quote only one instance of a synoptic implicate for a Johannine theologumenon: the conception of Christ as chosen by a pre-temporal act of God for His mission on earth is not confined to the Fourth gospel; it appears, in a messianic form, in the synoptic view of God's good pleasure as shown in the election of the messiah to carry out the divine purpose of revelation on earth. Thus a passage like the adapted quotation in Matt. xii. 18 (*Behold*

my Son, whom I adopted, my Beloved, in whom my soul took delight) is exactly parallel to the Johannine description of Christ as *Him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world.* What is emphasised in the Fourth gospel is in the background of the synoptic theology ; still, it is there.

Such conceptions of God and Christ or of the world we are accustomed to term 'Johannine,' since they are presented in a document which the second century associated with the authorship of John. But this presentation is only their final and classical form. The 'Johannine' theology embodies conceptions like those of the Logos and of the Spirit which had been already current, in incipient forms, throughout not only Egyptian and Hellenistic circles but even the earlier theology of Paul and the synoptic gospels, and the less isolated we make them the more characteristic they become. The stamp of comparative originality is upon Johannine conceptions like those of light and truth and glory. Nevertheless, even such ideas presuppose an atmosphere of common interest and sympathy. They are typical of a mode of thought at the close of the first century, which had been growing for decades in certain circles, and which renders explicit and coherent a number of earlier intuitions of the primitive Christian religion within as well as without the first three gospels.

It is certainly the case that the element of interpretation is considerably larger in the Fourth gospel than in the first three. In the dialogues and even in the prayers of Christ there are deliberate arguments and statements about the relation between God and Christ, between Christ and men, between the world

and God. The object of the book is, no doubt, practical and spiritual, but the predominant conception is that of the supreme value which attaches to the person of Christ as the incarnate Logos through whom the divine reality has entered this unsubstantial world, and in whom the believing man attains to life eternal. At first sight it does appear as though theology had prevailed over faith. We may feel that the doctrinal significance of Christ's person, cosmological and mysterious, has lifted an Alexandrian theosophy [1] into the place formerly occupied by the simpler self-revelation of Jesus in word and deed. This is not the final impression of the book, however. There are other elements which modify such a verdict. At the same time, it is not unreasonable to forecast, from the trend of recent criticism, that some of the historical sections in the synoptic tradition will be found closer to the Johannine stories than has hitherto been imagined. One or two of the synoptic miracles, for example, show the same creative pressure of tendency as the Johannine—the naïve dramatisation of a belief in an anecdote, the symbolic story, or the passage of a parable into a miracle. As an offset to this, we may count not only the recognition of

[1] Kreyenbühl (*Evangelium d. Wahrheit*, i. 383 f.) asserts that in the prologue it is Plato whom we hear, not Philo, and that if there is any allusion to the latter it is by way of polemic. It is true that John's Logos is not a vice-god or a subordinate divine power, but the Philonic background of the Fourth gospel's theology is unmistakable. Where the gospel reminds us of Plato is in the dialogues as much as in the prologue; the dialectic, which aims at confounding the opponents and which develops arguments in narrative form, recalls the Platonic method even more than the prologue recalls the Platonic spirit.

superior historical traditions in the Fourth gospel (as *e.g.* the date of Christ's death), but—what is more important for our present purpose—the perception of so-called 'Johannine' conceptions present, though as a rule in more or less undeveloped form, within the synoptic theology. The loss, from the standpoint of historicity, is counterbalanced by a gain theologically.

To sum up, the religious view of Jesus Christ which the synoptic gospels represent, under all their idiosyncrasies and characteristic categories, carries with it presuppositions which led not unnaturally to the later estimate of His person in the pages of the Fourth gospel. The latter's christology was not simply the attempt of an independent thinker to restate, in terms of the Logos idea, a conception of Christ which Paul had been primarily responsible for domiciling within the faith of primitive Christianity. The germs of it may be found within the theology of the synoptic gospels. The more consistently we refuse to harmonise at any cost the theological as well as the historical contents of the four gospels, the better we shall be able to realise that their authors might have protested with justice, *though we or an angel from heaven were to preach any gospel other than what we preached to you, let him be anathema.* That was indeed the passionate protest of one whose theology was distinctive, if anything was distinctive in early Christian thought, and it might be argued that the author of the Fourth gospel, for example, like Paul, was more revolutionary than perhaps he realised. A great thinker, like a great reformer, will sometimes claim, in all good faith, that he is

only reproducing what is common to himself and his age, although in reality, as events prove, he is less conservative than he imagines. But while the plane of thought in the Fourth gospel is obviously different from that which characterises the general strata of the first three, it is the same Jesus who is behind and above all four. There are traits common to the Fourth gospel and its predecessors, and these are not confined to the use of similar language nor to the occasional presence of elements native to the earlier church's belief which are preserved amid the distinctive and original ideas of that gospel itself. It is through the latter, not outside of them, that historical criticism can detect features which mark a line of continuity between the first three gospels and the Fourth in point of their theology.

(*c*) The fact that within the compass of the gospels there are instances of changes introduced by a later writer for the sake of doctrine raises the further question: May not the text of the canonical gospels have been modified or amplified at certain points in the interests of later Christian belief? The abstract possibility of this is not to be denied. The text of the gospels was probably more liable to corruption and change of this kind during the early period than later, when they came to be safeguarded by their ecclesiastical position, and it is just in the earlier period that it is naturally difficult to obtain evidence for such changes from the textual phenomena of the manuscripts.

Four characteristic instances in which such a process has been legitimately suspected are (i) the elimination, for harmonising purposes, of *this day have I begotten thee*, in favour of *in thee am I*

well pleased, in the text of Luke iii. 22; (ii) the insertion, in whole or part, of the rock-saying in Matt. xvi. 18-19; (iii) the expansion of the original text of Matt. xxviii. 19, as given by Eusebius, into the trinitarian form of the canonical text; and (iv) the alteration in the text of John i. 13, which turns it into a witness for the dogma of the virgin-birth. These are only specimens of this hypothesis, but they are typical. Each has to be considered on its merits.[1]

(i) The special reading preserved by D (also, a b c ff[2] l r) might be due to the desire of approximating the bath-qol verbally to Ps. ii. 7, or it may be taken to reflect the original form of the saying, which was afterwards altered owing to a sense of discrepancy between this impartation of the Spirit (as constituting Jesus God's Son) and the story of the virgin-birth in the same gospel or the narrative of the baptism in Mark and Matthew. The latter view (so *e.g.* Blass, Spitta, Usener, Pfleiderer, Zahn, Wernle, Conybeare; see the present writer's *Introduction to the Literature of the N.T.*, p. 269) seems upon the whole more likely, whatever may have been the original significance attached to the phrase or its relation to the foregoing section of the gospel.[2] The reading is vouched for as early as Justin Martyr, and its remarkably wide prevalence in the second and third centuries is a factor in its favour. In this case there is reason to suspect

[1] Further instances of such primitive readings, altered subsequently for theological purposes, in Zahn's *Introduction to N.T.*, iii. 38 f.

[2] On the question of its presence in Q, cf. Salmon's *Human Element in the Gospels*, pp. 56 f., and Harnack's *Sayings of Jesus*, pp. 310 f.

that the alteration was due to a doctrinal interest, which found the Lucan text, *Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee*, inconvenient and misleading.

(ii) The entire Matthean passage, xvi. 18-19, is one of the author's Jewish-Christian insertions, in which it is extremely difficult to conjecture what, if any, was the original basis (cf. the present writer's *Introduction*, pp. 252 f.). The hypothesis that one if not both of the verses must be the work of a second-century editor, who used some apocryphal logion in the interest of the Petrine supremacy, has been developed recently by M. Guignebert in his *Primauté de Pierre et la venue de Pierre à Rome* (Paris, 1909). Unfortunately, there is no textual evidence here to support the conjecture; it is purely a question of internal evidence, which is apt to be decided upon presuppositions about the likelihood of Jesus mentioning the church at all, or about the ecclesiastical functions which are assigned to Peter. The latter are probably more than the ordinary Protestant interpretation admits, but they are far from justifying the later Roman interpretation; the absence of the saying from the Petrine gospel of Mark, its omission by Luke, and its deliberate correction by the author of the Fourth gospel, are sufficient to indicate the importance attached to it by the early church, if it did exist in the original text of Matthew.

(iii) There is an equal lack of MSS. evidence in support of the contention that Matt. xxviii. 19 originally ran as follows:—*Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations* [*in my name*], *teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you.* Here, as in the case of (ii), the Syriac versions are unfor-

tunately defective, but this Eusebian form of the text, which omitted the baptismal formula, must have been current at an early date; it is doubtful, to judge from *Apol.* i. 61, whether Justin knew the canonical form, and the latter is more likely to be an expansion of the former than vice versa. The absence of anything equivalent in the Lucan tradition or even in the appendix to Mark (xvi. 15 f.) also tells in favour of the view that the shorter form of the text was original (cf. Prof. Lake's statement in *Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, ii. pp. 379 f.), and that the longer form emanated from the same circles or at any rate from the same liturgical and ecclesiastical motives as gave rise to xvi. 18 f. But the evidence does not amount upon the whole to much more than a possibility.[1]

(iv) Both early patristic evidence and evidence from the Latin versions support the singular reading of John i. 13: *Who was born.* The canonical plural reading is actually described by Tertullian as a gnostic corruption of the text (see especially Zahn's note on John i. 13).[2] In reality, the singular was probably an early modification of the plural in the interests of the growing dogma of the virgin-birth, but even if that reading were adopted it

[1] It is the connection of the threefold name with baptism, rather than the occurrence of the former, that is the main difficulty. The threefold name, which forms the basis for the later trinitarian speculations, exists already in Paulinism; whether the form of 2 Cor. xiii. 14 was due, as Harnack conjectures, to anti-Jewish controversy, and whether the alternative form of God, Christ, and the angels (cf. Luke ix. 26; 1 Tim. v. 21) was a less developed stage, we have no means of determining exactly.

[2] It is also read by Blass, and by Resch (*Paralleltexte zu Johannes*, pp. 57 f.).

would not follow that it implied such a dogma. It would rule out a mother as well as a father. The context simply implies that the children of the Father owe their position to His love and choice through Jesus. There is no evidence, on the other hand, to suggest that *the Word became flesh* by the descent of the Spirit at the baptism. The mode of the incarnation is left undetermined, and the christology of the gospel, like that of Paul, enters into no speculation whatever upon the subject. The Son was sent; for religious purposes, that thought sufficed. What i. 13, in the singular as well as in the plural reading, asserts is the sole activity of God, as opposed to human initiative. The plural reading, in the light of the context, implies that to be born of God is to have faith, and that this is due wholly to divine influence (*You did not choose me, it was I who chose you*)—a characteristic note of the Fourth gospel. No satisfactory reason can be assigned for the change of the singular into the plural, whereas not only dogmatic but even grammatical reasons (the immediately preceding αὐτοῦ) would explain the reverse process.

It is probable that such alteration of the canonical texts must have gone further than is commonly supposed, or than the present state of the texts enables us to determine. But it is to be noted that in these four test cases the doctrinal alteration is generally in the line of sharpening an interest already present, not for the purpose of introducing some novel dogma. The question is one of emphasis rather than of addition. The messianic endowment of Jesus as Son of God at the baptism, the association

of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the virgin-birth, and even the leading position of Peter in some circles of the early church, are vouched for, independently of these additions and expansions. From the theological point of view, they mark not the incorporation of fresh elements so much as the evolution of elements which were already present in the primitive theology of the gospels themselves.

(*d*) Finally, there is the minor question of language. The passage of the tradition in its pre-canonical stages from the vernacular Aramaic to the written Greek in which our gospels and most of their sources were composed, cannot have been without some effect upon the contents of the tradition at several points. 'Whereas Jesus spoke in Aramaic, the most concrete and unmetaphysical of languages, he is reported in Greek, the most metaphysical.'[1] But it is almost entirely in the Fourth gospel that this semi-metaphysical tinge appears; when we attempt to translate the synoptic sayings back from Greek to Aramaic the results are rarely of importance, so far as regards theology. There is nothing about Himself or God in the canonical gospels which Jesus could not have said intelligibly in Aramaic. He could even have called Himself *Son of man* in that language without the risk of being misunderstood (see below, Chapter IV.). The appearance of the written gospels in Greek, after the earlier Aramaic tradition, which was for the most part oral, had nothing like the significance for their theology which the later adoption of terms like οὐσία and

[1] Matthew Arnold, *Literature and Dogma* (popular ed., 1883), p. 144.

persona had for the development of christology in the Church. Christianity as we know it has come to us through the Greek gospels, and for the purpose of their theology it is seldom necessary to take special account of the Aramaic background behind any term or saying.

As a matter of fact, it is better here and elsewhere in the criticism of the gospels to stand back from the trees in order to see the forest. Detailed exegesis of the gospels has its own function; elaborate research into the Aramaic substratum, the minutiæ of the literary variants between the gospels, and the special features which differentiate one from the other, is an indispensable discipline. But the common faith is larger and deeper than such characteristics and idiosyncrasies. They are usually eddies or currents in the river. They are differences of the second and third degree, seldom if ever of the first. The significant thing, for the theology of the gospels, is the attitude to Christ which they presuppose and illustrate in different ways, the fundamental conviction that with Jesus a new relationship to God has been effected and inaugurated. It is uncritical to reach this common postulate by the path of harmonising; the gospels show how it developed gradually and how various aspects of it appealed to different circles in the early church. But it is equally irrelevant to allow the mind to become absorbed in the pursuit of exegetical details till it loses the perspective of the whole. *The open secret of our religion*, says a later writer [1] (quoting from some early Christian hymn), *is admittedly great*

[1] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

—*He who was*
Manifested in the flesh,
Vindicated by the Spirit,
Seen by angels,
Preached among the nations of men,
Believed on throughout the world,
Taken up to heavenly glory.

The theology of the gospels, unlike Paulinism, has no place for the doctrine of Christ's revelation to angelic beings after the resurrection,[1] but it corresponds to the remaining features of this primitive confession; the modern distinction between the historical and the supernatural in the vocation of Christ is ignored, and the essential fact of Christianity is found in the person of Jesus Christ. By common confession that was the distinctive note of the new religion, which was struck by all, whether they were writing a hymn or a gospel. The mystery or open secret was the personality of Christ. This was what distinguished the gospels from Judaism and Hellenism alike, and it is a difference which is immensely greater than any differences between one gospel and another. As early as the second century it had become common in some circles to suppose that when Paul mentioned *my gospel* and spoke of *the brother whose praise in the gospel*[2] was widespread throughout the churches, he was referring to a written gospel, and specifically to the gospel of Luke. The significance of this error lies in its witness to a particular contemporary application of the term 'gospel.' From denoting

[1] Cf. the *Ascension of Isaiah*, x.
[2] 2 Cor. viii. 18.

the message of Jesus as the Christ, *i.e.* the Christian religion, it had begun to centre upon the acts and words of Jesus, and then, by a natural evolution, upon the written records of the Lord's life. The epistles preached Christ, but they were not gospels. The term was restricted to the books which described *what Jesus began both to do and to teach until the day on which he was received up.*[1] It is right to emphasise the importance of this singular limitation for the history of the Church, if for no other reason than that it indicates 'to what an extent the communication of the words and deeds of the Lord must have formed from the very first the main content of the glad tidings, when the two were denoted by the same name and no other.'[2] The epistles and the gospels alike sprang out of the Gospel, but it was only the latter form of early Christian composition which drew to itself the sacred name, and this is all the more striking as there was nothing in the original meaning of the Greek term or in the literary structure of the four books to set the process in motion.

Such an estimate of the gospels helps to determine the sense of what 'theology' means in connection with them. By 'theology' the pre-Christian Greeks meant some account of the divine beings or being, and this general sense of the term, as the conception or definition of the God worshipped in any given religion, reappears, for example, in Hooker.[3] 'The whole drift of the Scripture of God, what is it but only to teach Theology? Theology, what is it but the science of things divine?'

[1] Acts i. 1.
[2] Harnack, *The Constitution and Law of the Church*, p. 308.
[3] *Eccles. Polity*, Book III. viii. 11.

Among some of the Greek theologians, however, the term came to have a more restricted range; it was confined to the ascription of a divine nature to Christ, and consequently tended to become a technical expression for that aspect of christology which the Logos idea of the Fourth gospel popularised. It would be unbalanced to hold that the gospels are theological in the latter rather than in the former sense of the term. 'Theologia deum docet, a deo docetur, ad deum ducit'—that is true of the gospels; even in the Fourth gospel it is the conception of God which is still dominant, though the person of the Son has assumed a larger prominence, relatively to the Father, than in the synoptic tradition. At the same time, the fundamental interest of the gospels, from the theological point of view, is the divine significance of Jesus, just as there is also a concentration upon His personality which equally prevents us from describing or from treating the theology of the gospels as a general account of things divine upon the basis of Christianity. The Fourth gospel does extend its survey more definitely to the relations of God through Christ to the universe as well as to men, but even this cosmic extension has its limitations, and it is far from making the person of Christ subsidiary or supplementary.[1] We shall proceed therefore to discuss first the God of Jesus; this opens up into the question of the person of Jesus, since the revelation of God is mediated

[1] 'The centre of gravity in theology can never be shifted from the person of Christ. The Jesus whom we call Master is at once the historical Jesus of Nazareth and that ideal form which becomes more and more glorious as man's moral capacity increases' (Cheyne in *Expositor*, sixth series, vol. iii. pp. 270-1).

by His life as well as by His teaching; finally, we shall trace the evolution of the conception of the Spirit of God in relation to Jesus, which, in the Fourth gospel, furnishes a standpoint for interpreting the theology of the gospels in general. Before entering upon any of these topics, however, it is essential to face the eschatological problem in the tradition, not simply because this happens to be a matter of special interest at the present day, but also because everything depends upon the answer which we give to the question: Is the theology of the gospels an eschatology pure and simple?

CHAPTER II

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE GOSPELS

In the fifth book of the *Prelude* Wordsworth describes how, after reading *Don Quixote* on a summer day beside the sea, he dreamed a dream. He seemed to watch a Bedouin Arab riding up to him with a stone under one arm and a brilliant shell in the other hand. When the dreamer held up the shell to his ear he

> 'Heard that instant in an unknown tongue
> Which yet I understood, articulate sounds,
> A loud prophetic blast of harmony;
> An ode, in passion uttered, which foretold
> Destruction to the children of the earth
> By deluge now at hand.'

The rigorous and vigorous eschatological theory of the gospels, as presented by a critic like Schweitzer, puts a similar alternative before the mind: the story of Jesus is either a stone, meaningless and unimpressive, or a shell in which you hear only a loud prediction of imminent doom. The theology of the gospels is an eschatology or it is nothing. What Jesus was and taught is unintelligible except in the light of His intense passion for setting astir forces that would deluge the world with all the woes which usher in the last act of bliss in the supernatural drama of the universe.

Schweitzer's book, *Von Reimarus zu Wrede*, is

brilliantly written. It has had the further advantages of a generous notice from Dr. Sanday and an exceptionally good rendering into English.[1] For these reasons many people have been led to regard him as more representative than he really is, and by scoring points, as it is not difficult to do, against several of his extreme positions, to imagine that they have succeeded in dismissing the claims of the eschatological theory which he champions. As a matter of fact, that theory is more persuasively, because more moderately, presented by two of his predecessors, Otto Schmoller and J. Weiss, the former in a prize essay on 'The Doctrine of the Kingdom of God in the New Testament Writings' (1891), which anticipated the issues of the modern eschatological movement, the latter in the second edition of his monograph on 'The Preaching of Jesus about the Kingdom of God' (1900). Wordsworth closes his dream by telling how the Arab finally said he intended to bury the shell which had sounded the prophecy of doom. This is the proper fate for the rigid eschatological theory of the gospels; we have no use as historical critics or as Christians for an interpretation of Jesus, however brilliant, which will not allow us to hear any notes in His teaching and mission except those of imminent and inevitable catastrophe. But there are elements in the tradition of the gospels which remain even after Schweitzer's shell is buried, elements which render the precise basis and range of the eschatological outlook in the theology of the synoptic gospels a real and a baffling problem.

[1] *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (1910), by Rev. W. Montgomery. Cf. further Dr. Sanday's *Life of Christ in Recent Research*.

The problem may be put sharply by throwing two words [1] of Jesus into juxtaposition. *Verily I say to you, There are some of those standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God arrive with power.* Set that beside this: *So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed on the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knows not how. The earth bears fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle because the harvest is come.* Here there is a climax in view, a climax which has a messianic ring about it, but which need not be unauthentic on that account. The parables contained 'the mystery of the kingdom,' and part of that mystery was the new and startling conception of the relation of Jesus to it. The contrast between the two sayings is not that the one contemplates an abrupt crisis, while the other looks forward to a long gradual process of evolution; it is that the dénouement is in the one case an event in the immediate future which is identified with the real arrival of the kingdom of God, while in the other it is the end of an inward development in which the kingdom is regarded as present through the ministry of Jesus. The gospels contain sayings which belong, some to the one group, some to the other. The problem is to determine how both are psychologically possible for Jesus, and to what extent the one has affected the other during the course of tradition prior to the canonical gospels. Which element is the more likely to have been accentuated in the apostolic age? Is either,

[1] Mark ix. 1 and iv. 26-29.

in whole or in large measure, due to the tendencies and interests of the later church in which and for which the gospels were drawn up? These are the kind of questions which are started by the presence of the eschatological stratum in the text of the first three gospels.

The first three, because there is no real problem of eschatology in the theology of the Fourth gospel. There are problems, but not of eschatology proper as in the criticism of the synoptists. There is an outlook now and then upon the end, but the dominant interests lie elsewhere, in the eternal life which becomes the present experience of those who put their faith in the living Christ. In the synoptic gospels it is still possible to trace the primitive tradition that Jesus expected His return as messiah during the course of the present generation, although He did not know the exact date of this outward crisis in the affairs of men. It is probable that the influence of the imminent fall of Jerusalem helped to intensify this expectation in some Palestinian circles of the church, but it was not created by the turn of events. The incorporation of the small apocalyptic fly-leaf is an incidental proof not only of their outlook upon the situation, but of the basis which that outlook must have had in the authentic teaching of Jesus Himself. Matthew and Luke show here and there how the churches met in various ways the need of a wider horizon for the prospects of the Christian faith, chiefly by laying deeper stress on the religious motives and interests of the eschatological passion which Jesus had voiced, upon His absolute confidence that His death would further the interests of the kingdom,

His calm conviction that the establishment of the kingdom depended on the will of God, not on any circumstances of human arrangement or enterprise, and His belief that in the realisation of the Father's good purpose for men He was destined to have a commanding place. But, even with this alteration of emphasis, the gospels preserve sayings of Jesus which must have seemed perplexing to the widening consciousness of what was involved in the Christian enterprise. These sayings survive because they had come down from authentic tradition; probably they were not felt to be so strange as they seem to a modern reader, but at any rate it was not till later that another evangelist reinterpreted the faith in a form which was not bound up with eschatological or apocalyptic categories. He did not look forward to see the glory of Christ; he had seen it, he saw it, in the Lord's life and spirit of self-sacrifice. The Coming One had come. It was no longer a question of anticipating a glory of dramatic interposition from the clouds of heaven; in the person of Jesus the Son all that was glorious and divine was manifested.[1] In the Fourth gospel the emphasis is shifted from the return to the resurrection of Christ. He had indeed returned to the life of His followers in fuller measure than before, and the Spirit, His *alter ego*, meant His living presence in their hearts as an inspiring and revealing power. Life eternal is not an eschatological boon but the immediate experience of faith. The judg-

[1] In the synoptic tradition this glorifying occurs once, during the life of Jesus, at the transfiguration, when the imminence of His death is represented as eliciting a special mark of approval from God (cf. the Lucan version, ix. 32).

ment is not a dramatic catastrophe at the close of the present age so much as a process of inward discrimination conditioned by the attitude adopted by men to the person of Christ.[1] It is through the resurrection that the real victory has been gained over the world—a victory of Christ as the giver of eternal life over death and the flesh. All this transmutation of the primitive tradition is presented in a gospel which claims that such spiritual conceptions are the larger truth into which the Spirit of Christ had initiated His Church; in modern phraseology, it is asserted that they are an organic development of the gospel for which Jesus stood.

How far, and how, can this claim be justified? The answer to such questions depends upon a critical estimate of the synoptic tradition. It is not enough to show that traces of what may be termed (though inadequately) a spiritualisation of the eschatological data can be detected already in the earlier synoptic writers. The essential point is to ascertain whether this entire movement which culminates in the Fourth gospel starts from elements which are vital to the faith of Jesus Himself; not only that He occasionally spoke words which cannot be fitted into any thorough-going eschatological theory of His teaching, but that His conceptions of God and the kingdom and His own person involved a religious attitude towards the future which did not find congenial or complete expression in the apocalyptic categories of the age.

[1] The germ of this goes back to Jesus Himself; it is an expansion of the thought which underlies Luke xvii. 20.

It is more than a mere paradox to say that the first thing in the gospels is their conception of the last things. The theology of the gospels, like every theology which arises within the Christian sphere, involves a teleology. Whatever value we assign to the eschatological element in the gospels, there is enough of it to bear witness to this vital conviction of the religious mind, that the present relation of God and man, the hopes and endeavours of men on earth, and the entire range of their love and loyalty, are unintelligible except in the light of a destiny which the divine purpose has been and still is working out in history. In religion, as Ritschl used to insist, we have to do not only with God and the soul, but with God, the soul, and the world. What is a possession of the soul must be related, somehow, to the world of which the soul is part and over which the soul's God is Lord. Theology means a conception of God in relation to the universe, and this in turn implies not simply a sense of the divine power in what moderns describe as Nature, not simply a valuation of God's presence, but a conviction of His purpose as the end. It is the end which gives meaning to the present. The end is not always present to the religious consciousness, it lies sometimes below the horizon; but it is always there. The common antithesis between ethical and eschatological breaks down upon examination. Eschatology was not void of ethical impulse and discipline in primitive Christianity; and the ethical element rested on an eschatological, though not always on an apocalyptic basis.

How organic the strictly eschatological element

was to the teaching of Jesus may be inferred from the mere fact that the saying,[1]

> *Heaven and earth will pass away,*
> *But my words will never pass away,*

occurs in an apocalyptic context: *Truly I tell you that this generation will not pass away until it all comes to pass.* The delay which confronted the Church when the synoptic gospels were composed was embarrassing, but the eschatological predictions of Jesus formed so vital a part of His gospel that they were retained; in fact, as the insertion of the small apocalypse shows, they were not only edited occasionally by way of smoothing down their incongruities with the subsequent cause of events, but also now and then sharpened and expanded. Thus the synoptic gospels, by their loyalty to this element in the primitive tradition, confront us with the paradox that the most confident word of Jesus upon the permanent value of His sayings guarantees the very class of sayings which appear to be least permanent.

Another incidental proof of this element and of its place in the teaching of Jesus is afforded by the survival of the difficult saying[2]: *When they persecute you in this city, flee to the other, and if they persecute you in the other, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, You will not cover the cities of Israel before the Son of man comes.* The saying interrupts the context, and its Jewish horizon is out of keeping not only with passages like xxiv. 14, xxviii. 19, etc., but with the words immediately preceding it

[1] Mark xiii. 31; Matt. xxiv. 35; Luke xxi. 33.
[2] Matt. x. 23.

in verses 18 and 22, which presuppose a mission to pagan nations beyond the pale of Israel. The point of the counsel seems to be that the evangelists need not be afraid of exhausting the available cities of refuge within Palestine. The end will come before ever they manage to get over them all!

But alongside of sayings which thus prove the predominance of the apocalyptic hope within the preaching of Jesus there are others which suggest that He transmuted, as He took over, this belief in the near advent of the kingdom.

(*a*) There are several sayings which imply that Jesus regarded the kingdom as a present reality in connection with His own person and teaching. The chief of these is the well-known passage in Luke xvii. 20-1: *On being questioned by the Pharisees when God's kingdom was to come, he replied, God's kingdom is not coming with observation, nor shall men say, Lo here! or Lo there! for, behold, God's kingdom is within you* (ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστιν). Whatever was the original Aramaic of this saying, it is upon the whole clear that Luke took it to express the inward character of the kingdom. Had he understood it as equivalent to a statement that the kingdom would appear suddenly among men, he would have used his favourite term ἐν μέσῳ instead of ἐντός. Even if ἐντός meant 'among,' it would imply most naturally that Jesus described the kingdom as already present, and this is much more the case when we render it 'within.' The word *you* does not rule this out, for the original reference, as Wellhausen points out, was not confined to the Pharisees. 'The kingdom of God here, as in the parable of the leaven, is conceived as a principle working invisibly in the

hearts of individuals.' The phrase *μετὰ παρατηρήσεως* means that the signs of it can be either seen or foreseen externally. Jesus denies that this is to be the case with God's Reign, as He understood it and inaugurated it. As He said elsewhere, no sign of the Reign was to be vouchsafed to the present generation except such inward signs and tokens as belonged to the nature of the Reign itself. The Lucan saying does not necessarily exclude a catastrophic future as the climax of the Reign; it simply insists that the Reign of God is already present in such a form that the present generation is responsible for its attitude to this manifestation of God.

The unlikelihood of the *ἐστιν* being proleptic in this saying is heightened by the cognate saying of Q preserved in Matt. xii. 28 (=Luke xi. 20): *If I cast out demons by the Spirit* [Luke has, *the finger*] *of God, then God's kingdom has already come upon you* (*ἔφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς*). This does not mean that the kingdom is imminent, as though the cures and exorcisms of Jesus were a harbinger of the new era which is on the point of coming; it means that the new era has already begun to challenge and invade the present sway of the devil on earth. As the context indicates, the messianic power of Jesus on earth denotes an inroad upon the demons who, under Satan, have control of men, and this inroad is the entrance of God's kingdom upon its final career.

Once more, this line of thought is corroborated by the other saying from Q (Matt. xi. 11=Luke vii. 28) upon John the Baptist: *He who is least within the kingdom of heaven is greater than he* (John). It is conceivable that the present tense here is

dramatic, but the natural and literal sense is more likely, in view of the context. John had sent to make sure that Jesus was really the messiah, and the reply of Jesus is followed up by an address to the crowd upon the epoch-making significance of John as the forerunner of the new messianic era. No man yet, says Jesus, has been greater than John; nevertheless, he only stands at the threshold of the kingdom. Then follows the word about the storming of the kingdom *from the days of John till now*, which implies that the kingdom was within reach of earnest men when Jesus spoke. He was conscious that His mission was fulfilling the old Isaianic prophecies. His reply to John denotes not the sense that a new era was in course of preparation, but that it was already inaugurated, and it is of this new order that He speaks.

The saying which immediately follows is a further proof of the conception of the kingdom as incipient in the ministry of Jesus:—

Matt. xi. 12-13	Luke xvi. 16
From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and the violent press into it. *For all the prophets and the law prophesied till John.*	*Till John, the law and the prophets! Thereafter the kingdom of God is preached, and every one presses into it.*

In Matthew this is followed up by the remark: *And if you will receive it, this is the Elijah who was to come*, which gives the clue to the previous saying. Jesus apparently is alluding to the contemporary tradition (cf. *Edujoth* 8 [7]) that Elijah would come

'to exclude from Israel those who had been received by force, and to receive into Israel those who had been excluded by force.' This dual function, of rejecting members who had forcibly and fraudulently claimed a place in the community, and of welcoming those who had been violently shut out from their rights,[1] has been inaugurated, Jesus argues, by John, when his mission is properly viewed. Only, his mission reversed the popular Jewish idea. In the Christian era, dating from John's movement, the tax-gatherers and sinners, hitherto excluded on the score of their disreputable character, are thronging into God's kingdom which Jesus preached, and those who claimed a place in it on the score of birth and orthodoxy are being excluded.

Again, when the high-minded scribe[2] delighted Jesus by confessing not only that God was one, but that *to love him with the whole heart and the whole understanding and the whole strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself, is far more than all holocausts and sacrifices*, Jesus told him: *You are not far from God's kingdom.* This word implies that the kingdom is not eschatological but present in the moral and spiritual order, just as in Matt. xxi. 31 (*The tax-gatherers and harlots are entering the kingdom of God before you*) and xviii. 3-4.

Sayings like this amount to a cumulative proof. When the scribe *e.g.* is told that he is *not far from God's kingdom*, and when the wealthy young Jew is asked to sell all his property, if he means to be perfect, and *follow* Jesus, the underlying idea is practically the same, that adhesion to the cause and person of Jesus Christ is the condition under

[1] Cf. Luke xi. 52. [2] Mark xii. 34.

which the sound moral life blossoms into the flower of a true faith and love for God. Wellhausen endeavours to discount the force of such passages by identifying the kingdom with the Church, and arguing that this identification presupposes the death of Jesus. But there is nothing in the context of either passage which involves the death of Christ as a motive for such adhesion, and in the cognate saying about the least in the kingdom being greater than John (who, for all his importance to the kingdom, had not become a personal disciple of Jesus) it is needless to discover an identification of the present kingdom and the Christian Church. What this series of allusions indicates is that the reign of God has already begun in some sense here and there on earth. It is no answer to this to argue that faith would then be superfluous; on the one hand, the visible signs of the presence of the kingdom were only partial and—we might almost say—preliminary, and on the other hand, such as they were they were capable of misinterpretation. It was possible to deny their validity. Zealots who strained their eyes for signs of a political rising could not recognise the kingdom in unselfishness and purity of heart and the forgiving spirit; where Jesus saw the real and royal presence of the Father they could only see unpatriotic, poor-spirited creatures. It was the same with some of the Pharisees, in their own way. They ascribed the cures wrought by Jesus to a connivance, on His part, with the devil. What He recognised as signs of the divine reign on earth, due to the working of the Spirit through His personality, they deliberately described as diabolic.

The attitude of Jesus towards the expulsion of demons, as proving the entrance of the divine kingdom upon the present order, implies further that He extended the same thought in other directions. It was not a belief which was connected simply with what is called the supernatural antagonism of God and the devil. We cannot draw such a distinction for the world of Jesus. The healings which He effected were bound up with the forgiveness of sins, and if the kingdom was present in the anti-demonic aspect it was equally present in the revelation of God's character and purpose through the attitude of Jesus towards the sinful and the burdened. His preaching of the new righteousness, His revelation of the Father's nature in deed as well as in word, constituted an immediate proof that the relationship to God which He called life was a present gift.[1] Jesus looked into the future for the final ratification and consummation of the gift, but it was of a gift already bestowed upon the experience of trust and loyalty. The reality of the Reign does not depend for Him upon the dramatic dénouement of the apocalyptic eschatology. It is the reverse. That future is assured by the character and purpose of God as already manifested in His mission and personality. Jesus never uses the term 'hope,' but it is hope in the living God which dominates His message, hope rising from a deep, inward consciousness of God's loving will for men. When He declared the *kingdom of God is at hand* He was not speaking out of apocalyptic calculation, but from His assurance that through

[1] See on this aspect of the kingdom Dr. G. F. Barbour's *Philosophical Study of Christian Ethics*, pp. 186 f.

Him God was about to exercise the sovereign sway of His good purpose. The avoidance of detailed calculations may have been due in part to His conviction that the end was imminent; but they were superfluous, for a deeper reason. It was His belief in God's character which rendered detailed schemes and programmes of the future irrelevant, just as it convinced Him that the kingdom, with its apparently unpromising beginnings in the present, was sure of a glorious consummation.

This is one reason why Jesus spoke of the kingdom in parables and occasionally explained their meaning to the disciples. His conception of the divine Reign had elements of novelty which did not tally with current ideas on the subject. The parables contained *the mystery of the kingdom*.[1] His message on the nature of the kingdom was a revelation, which only the sympathetic could understand. Whether it included the destiny of Himself as messiah is a question which is more easily asked than answered. If so, and if the explanations contained references to His own future, their substance has been preserved for the most part in other forms. But in itself the conjecture is not altogether improbable; the messianic, personal background shimmers through Mark iv. 29 and xii. 6, for example. His view of the kingdom implied teaching about His relation to its character, course, and end, and out of that teaching some of the passages referring to the death and resurrection may have come. In any case, the kingdom

[1] Mark (iv. 11) here has preserved the original form; the plural of Matthew and Luke is secondary. The 'mystery' cannot be confined to the nearness of the kingdom—that was openly proclaimed by John the Baptist as well as by Jesus.

parables are not popular illustrations of the obvious.[1] The kingdom as He revealed it, for example, had a future out of all proportion to its present unimpressive scale and size on earth (Mark iv. 30 f.). But, again, this future was not to come in a wholly cataclysmic fashion; its growth resembled leaven, not a sudden interposition of the supernatural within the natural order. It is noticeable, for example, how many of the parables are directed against impatience for the speedy advent of the kingdom. This applies not only to the parable of the seed growing secretly (Mark iv. 26-9), which is one of several sayings addressed to a mood of wonder why the messiah of God should be so inactive in the line of vigorous challenge and propaganda, but also to the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. xxv. 1-13), which warns the disciples to be prepared for delay in the final coming of the Lord.

Consequently the parabolic instruction of Jesus was doubly surprising. It was surprising both in form and in context, for there were no parables about the kingdom of heaven in rabbinic teaching, and the outline which Jesus drew of the character and future of that kingdom ran counter to some of the most cherished ideas of piety. Its messianic nature, as determined by the Fatherly purpose of God, involved a widening of its range which sounded strange to contemporary Judaism. No doubt, the contemporary use of 'malkuth' in Jewish piety (*e.g.* in the phrase about accepting the yoke of the divine sovereignty) tells decidedly against the view

[1] Cf. on this Dr. H. B. Sharman's *Teaching of Jesus about the Future*, pp. 315 f.

that the Reign of God upon the lips of Jesus must have been eschatological to be intelligible. The fact of Judaism, with its observance of the Torah and its worship of the true God, was a witness, even in the untoward position of the nation, to the divine sovereignty. It is true, as Volz points out, that the Reign of God was considered to have not only a prospect of future manifestation but already a number of loyal subjects on earth, and that in both of these respects the rabbinic and the synoptic views were agreed. Yet 'in spite of the predominance of eschatological sayings on the kingdom in the synoptic gospels, it is a fact that Jesus did transform the Reign of God from something which was eschatological, prepared already, and only to be waited for in an attitude of passivity, into something which developed historically and which was to be achieved; He thereby converted into a unity the two lines (eschatological and inward) of the βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, which ran parallel in the theological system of Judaism.'[1] The indications of this higher synthesis are not confined to the sayings which have just been noted; they are borne out, as we shall see, by the conception which Jesus had of God and of His own vocation. Meantime, however, it is enough to lay stress upon these specific allusions to the presence of the kingdom as a proof that the attitude of Jesus to this eschatological hope of Judaism can hardly have been so rigid as the eschatological theorists make out.

(*b*) In the second place, it is inaccurate to argue that Jesus conceived the kingdom would come without any effort upon the part either of Himself

[1] *Jüdische Eschatologie*, pp. 299-300.

or even of His disciples. He regarded His own death as a vital stage in the fulfilment of God's purpose. It was the will of the Father that He should thus sacrifice Himself for the sake of men; this was the outcome of His consciousness as God's Son, who was to carry out a rôle like that of Yahveh's Servant (cf. Chapter IV.). The conception of the throes or birth-pangs of suffering which were to precede the messianic era was already present, but this was not the primary source of the impulse which led Jesus to seek Jerusalem and suffer there.

Furthermore, His efforts to awaken penitence and to sustain earnest prayer for the kingdom point to a belief that the new order of things involved more than passive expectancy upon the part of men.[1] The command to pray, *Thy kingdom come*, was more than an injunction to breathe a pious sigh for the future. Jesus believed profoundly in the power of prayer to affect even the will of God in the matter of the coming kingdom. The Father was willing to be entreated. Men must be content to leave the how and when in His hands, but, while Jesus discouraged any attempt like that of the zealots to force the issue, and while He disclaimed any knowledge of the exact period of the crisis, He did not inculcate any fatalism. The burden of His teaching on prayer is that man, by earnest prayer, by the concentrated effort of the soul in devotion and desire, may 'bring the power of faith to bear upon the divine purpose.'[2]

This is an aspect of the kingdom to which modern

[1] This is the thought of Acts iii. 19-20 and Matt. ix. 37-38.

[2] Cf. Prof. E. F. Scott's *The Kingdom and the Messiah*, pp. 134 f., where this point is admirably argued.

readers often find it difficult to do justice; they are under the influence of preconceptions about natural law, and in looking back to the age of Jesus they are apt to identify His sayings about the divine intervention with a sort of Oriental fatalism. But the theology of the gospels, and especially their eschatology, is not intelligible unless it is realised that Jesus meant by prayer more than resignation to the will of God. A later writer once said that Christians should not only *look out for* but actually *hasten* the arrival of God's Day,[1] and this is the thought which underlies the teaching of Jesus upon the kingdom as an object of prayer. The faithful are to wrestle with God for the speedy accomplishment of His purpose; the Fatherly goodness of God and His royal authority forbid prayer becoming a form of dictation or a wild, impatient complaint, but they invite the earnest efforts of the faithful to hasten His interposition. All this, again, is hopelessly inconsistent with the uncompromisingly predestinarian view of the eschatologists.

(*c*) Thirdly, there are sections of the ethical teaching in the synoptic gospels which cannot be brought under the eschatological category, as if Jesus only taught conduct which was appropriate to the interval preceding the final advent of the kingdom. It is not eschatology which supplies *e.g.* the motive for loving one's enemies, or the point of stories like those of the good Samaritan and the profligate son. The tendency of an ultra-eschatological view here is either to depreciate the moral teaching of Jesus or to reduce His interest in the present world to some casual glances which were irrelevant to His main

[1] 2 Peter iii. 12.

passion for the future. Jesus was much more than an ethical teacher. He was a prophet and more than a prophet. But His conception of God renders it impossible for us to believe that His teaching upon character and conduct was transitory, and subordinate in principle to the eschatological hope of the coming kingdom. In the beatitudes, for example, there is not simply a description of those who are predestined to the future kingdom. Jesus lays down the qualities and characteristics which belong to the kingdom itself, and endeavours to prepare men for it by inducing repentance or a change of heart and life. He is enunciating the laws and principles of the coming reign, when God is to rule as the Father over men, and He shows how even during the present age, with its handicaps and hindrances, men may observe these laws and enter into the Spirit of the Father. The future coming of the kingdom will alter many of the conditions of the present order. But it will belong to men just as they are already qualified to receive it; the new righteousness, which is its soil and atmosphere, is implicit in the present relations of men to God which Jesus seeks to create and foster. To read the gospels as if they meant that Jesus despaired entirely of the present world, or as if His ethical teaching were provisional and temporary, is to throw His mission even more out of focus than if the apocalyptic element were explained away altogether. For example, His argument against amassing riches is not that this is not worth a man's while, since the final catastrophe is so near; it is that such a concentration of heart upon outward possessions is at variance with a free devotion to the Father. Or again, in

speaking of marriage He never takes up the position that, in view of the imminent end, such natural ties had better be left alone. It was Paul, not Jesus, who said: *The fashion of this world is passing away . . . the time is shortened* (1 Cor. vii. 26 f.), and used this consideration of the present distress to discourage marriage.

Both in Q and in Mark, in the former more than in the latter, there are strata of the teaching of Jesus which do not rest upon the eschatological passion for the urgency of the end, and these strata belong to the most characteristic of the gospels. It is necessary to read the latter with a sense of proportion. The mind of Jesus is larger than the apocalyptic theory would allow, and no sort of justice is done to it unless the absolute validity which He attached to the truths of pardoning love, trust in God, and the higher righteousness is candidly admitted.[1]

These three considerations bring out the critical attitude of Jesus to the current conception of the kingdom of God, an attitude due to the new religious ideas for which He made it the vehicle. No doubt, the outlook of Jesus upon the future is not to be

[1] Loisy (*Jésus et la Tradition Évangélique*, pp. 127, 131) puts this frankly. 'L'idée du règne de Dieu s'épanouissait en doctrines où l'on peut discerner trois éléments: le nationalisme traditionnel, ou ce que le Dieu d'Israël fait pour son peuple; une règle de vie morale, qui se fonde sur un principe de religion universelle; la transformation du monde, le triomphe complet de Dieu, pour que l'élite d'Israël et de l'humanité puisse jouir paisiblement du bonheur dans la justice.' In the teaching of Jesus, 'le nationalisme de l'idée se trouve en partie corrigé par l'importance essentielle donnée à son aspect moral, soit en ce qui regarde les moyens de sa réalisation, soit en ce qui regarde les conditions requises pour être admis au royaume.'

confined to sayings about the kingdom ; it embraces a wider prospect, just as the emphasis upon the present reality of the divine Reign emerges in sections of His teaching which are not specifically connected with the *βασιλεία*. But naturally it was the conception of the divine Reign of the Father which embodied most of the characteristic ideas of Jesus, and it is here that the antinomy of the present and the future is most sharply expressed.

The Greek term *βασιλεία*, as used in the gospels, is better translated 'reign' or 'sovereignty' than 'kingdom' in perhaps the majority of instances. The latter rendering suggests associations of organisation and territory which are misleading, and even although it has to be retained for the sake of general convenience, the sense attached to it must be primarily the personal rule of God over His people, the divine government as realised through the faithful obedience of men to their royal Father in heaven ; in a word, 'reign' rather than 'domain.' Now, the coming of God's kingdom *with power* is the final return of Jesus as the Son of man within the present generation (Mark viii. 38-ix. 1), and Matthew makes this explicit by his version of the second saying (xvi. 28), which substitutes *the Son of man coming in His kingdom* for *the kingdom of God come in power*. Incidentally, it is a proof of the comparative independence of the Marcan christology as against the Pauline (cf. Rom. i. 4), which assigns the full power of Christ as Lord to the resurrection, not to the second advent ; but primarily it bears witness to the urgent hope of Jesus. Whether He spoke of *the kingdom* simply, or of *the kingdom of God*, is indifferent. The usage of the gospels varies

on this point significantly. Thus Mark and Luke alike speak of *the kingdom* or *the kingdom of God*, while Matthew's favourite expression is *the kingdom of heaven* (ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν)—a phrase which, apart from two allusions in the gospel of the Hebrews and the Fourth gospel (iii. 3, 5),[1] is peculiar to Matthew among the early gospels. It denotes a kingdom already present and prepared in heaven, and on the point of being established on earth by the intervention of God. Whether the addition *of heaven* is connected with the Jewish impersonal synonym for God, or whether the phrase in Matthew has a specially transcendental and eschatological value, it is not easy to say. Its usage may form part and parcel of the increased eschatological element, which is prominent in Matthew; or, it may have been altered in Mark and Luke into expressions which were more intelligible to Greek and Roman Christians. It is doubtful if Matthew intended to draw any sharp distinction between *the kingdom of heaven* as the future realm to be introduced by the Son of man, and *the kingdom of God* as in a sense present upon earth. In two of the references to the latter the reading is uncertain (vi. 33, xix. 24), and more than once *the kingdom of heaven* is used in a sense which is not necessarily eschatological (*e.g.* xi. 11, 12; xiii. 31; xxiii. 13). In any case, the primary eschatological sense of βασιλεία as the Reign is brought out by its use and

[1] Also in the Oxyrhynchite logion (second of second series). The reading in John is doubtful, but in any case Matthew's phrase is not an approximation to the Johannine idea of the Father's house (xiv. 2, 4), as if the pious were to be taken up to the kingdom in heaven.

context in many other passages of the gospels, apart altogether from the addition of τῶν οὐρανῶν.

On one or two occasions, *e.g.* in Matt. xxi. 43 (*The kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation which produces its fruits*), the term is used in a more popular and general sense; it is implied that the Jews as the ancestral people of God possess it now in the sense of the theocracy. Their acknowledgment of God as King means their possession of the kingdom here and now, though their refusal of Jesus is to deprive them of this privilege. But such a use is exceptional. Equally exceptional is the occasional use by Jesus of the phrase: *My kingdom.* Thus Luke (xxii. 29-30) makes Him speak of the realm as His own: *I bequeath to you a realm, as my Father bequeathed to me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my realm.* John characteristically emphasises this aspect of the realm in one of his rare allusions to it (xviii. 34 f.): *Pilate said to Him, Are you the king of the Jews? . . . Jesus replied, My realm does not belong to this world.* In a sense the divine realm might be said to belong to the Son of man as the divine inaugurator of it. A priori, there is no reason to doubt that Jesus may have spoken of it as His. But the eschatology of the gospels does not include the conception of a βασιλεία Χριστοῦ, as distinguished from the βασιλεία θεοῦ. J. Weiss[1] has argued that the language of Matt. xiii. 41 and Mark ix. 1 involves such an idea, corresponding to the Pauline view in 1 Cor. xv. 24 f. and Col. i. 13; but this double-stage interpretation, which he admits was not held by Jesus, is not absolutely essential to either of these sayings in the gospels.

[1] *Predigt*[2], pp. 40 f.

The Marcan passage does not rest on an antithesis between the kingdom in weakness and in power. The former notion would never have occurred to the early church, and it is pressing language into dogmatic moulds to find a difference between the Son of man's kingdom and the Father's in the Matthean parable. Elsewhere the kingdom is called Christ's (Matt. xvi. 28, xx. 21), in a way which suggests that the distinction is one of aspect rather than of stages.

It is interesting to trace the changes made by Paul and the apostolic church in Christ's conception of the kingdom, and to notice how several of its cardinal items are expressed often in other terms; but it is more important to ascertain the modifications which Jesus Himself introduced into the significance of this ancient belief. Thus, He stood aside from the traditional view that the present Reign of God in Israel would sometime and somehow pass into a world-wide recognition of God as Israel's God by the nations, as well as from the cognate hope that the future would witness the overthrow of the Roman power, which represented the contemporary antithesis of the divine Realm. The subtle favouritism, the nationalistic idea of God, and the external reliance on political methods, which were involved in such hopes, were alien to Jesus. A large number of messianic expectations looked forward to a national re-establishment of Judaism as the sovereign power; others, of a more specifically apocalyptic character, soared into the transcendental region of a heavenly Jerusalem and a supernatural change to be effected in the universe. The former occasionally blended with the latter; the one took over elements from the other. The messiah now

and then became a transcendent, supernatural figure rather than a Davidic scion, and the heavenly order of the new age was more than once presented in forms which owed something of their definiteness and popularity to the realistic messianism of the older prophecies. The theology of the gospels shows in outline, but without ambiguity, how Jesus stood towards this heterogeneous and many-sided conception. So far as the advent and future of the divine Reign went, He approximated to the position of the Pharisees rather than to that of the Zealots. The latter are opposed in several of His explicit sayings against the use of force, but His indifference to their patriotic propaganda is even more significant. Probably it gave more mortal offence. 'At great political crises he who opposes the patriots is not so likely to be considered their worst foe, as he who ignores them. It was not that our Lord preached submission to Rome, though no doubt the decision as to the tribute money was capable of being represented in that light—it was that He roused a spirit which moved in another plane than that of resistance or submission to imperial power.'[1] On the other hand, He differed radically from the Pharisees on the question of the repentance and righteousness which were essential to inheritance in the kingdom of God to come. History and experience had disillusionised the Pharisees. They saw that the coming of the divine Reign on earth must be an act of God in the dim future, which would be supernatural, not brought on by any rebellion against the power of Rome. Like the Sadducees, though for higher motives, they

[1] Miss Wedgwood, *The Message of Israel*, p. 305.

were prepared to acquiesce temporarily in the *status quo* of the Roman suzerainty. The nationalist and political form of the messianic hope was therefore challenged on two sides: by the more transcendent expectation of a Davidic Son of man which appealed to some apocalyptic circles, and by the temper which discountenanced any messianic movement as dangerous. Jesus undoubtedly was in more sympathy with the former than with the latter, but the kingdom which He preached was of so unique a character that it enabled the Pharisees to make capital out of His supposed anti-Roman tendencies, just as it disappointed those who secretly expected that a messiah would be at least sympathetic with the patriotic hopes of the popular mind about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel.

The eschatological element of the kingdom in the preaching of Jesus was not merely apocalyptic, however. Apocalyptic was invariably eschatological, but eschatology was not invariably apocalyptic. A closer analysis of the transcendental apocalyptic idea in Judaism shows that this very passion for a vivid effective revelation of God in the immediate future involved frequently a spiritualising tendency, and the criticism of the gospels lays bare the striking fact that the Jesus who shared this form of eschatological hope believed in a God who was by no means the distant deity of conventional apocalyptic, but a living, loving Father.[1] The belief of Jesus in God, which is fundamental for the valuation of the eschatological element in the gospels, is a warning against

[1] Jesus uses the term 'kingdom' where the rabbis often spoke of 'the age to come'; He never uses 'kingdom' as a periphrasis for the more direct expression of God's real and immediate intervention.

all rough-and-ready identifications of the message of Jesus on the kingdom with the apocalyptic schemes in whose dialectic many of His sayings happen to be couched. It is in His conception of God, more than in the derivative conception of the kingdom, that we can discover the faith for which He lived and died. As God the Father was not merely or even mainly an object of hope for Himself or for men, it followed that the Realm or Reign could not be relegated exclusively to the age to come; much less could it be confined to the sons of Israel. The kingdom to Jesus was not an abstract, vague condition of humanity, but neither was it defined in terms of an antithesis to the pagan powers of the world. It was the order and sphere of bliss for men, bliss being conceived as perfect loyalty to the will of the Father, or as Life (cf. Matt. viii. 22, Luke xv. 32, Mark ii. 19, Matt. xii. 28) in the fullest sense of the term; and both aspects (the latter marks a transcending of the eschatological idea) were related to the special functions which the Christ of God had to discharge in order that men might participate in the fellowship of heaven. Thus, the kingdom was to come for the Jews, but not because they were Jews, and not for Jews only; the condition of entrance was not a punctilious observance of the Torah, as the Pharisees interpreted it. If Jesus ever hoped that Israel as a whole would repent, He appears soon to have realised that the religious authorities and the mass of the people were obdurate. He had more hope of the world in general than of His own people, and He faced death, not in a mood of eschatological desperation, but in the consciousness that His self-sacrifice would avail to

redeem the wider circle. As the Son of the Father, who loved men in spite of their sins; as the Servant of God who, in His great pity and love, was willing to suffer in order to redeem men, He went with hope and courage to the cross. The conviction that He must die, to carry out the Father's purpose, would carry with it the hope of resurrection as a triumph over the forces of death and sin, but the inspiration of this hope lay in His profound faith; He drew it, as He drew the consciousness of God the living Father which sustained it, from His inward communion with the Father, not from an apocalyptic dogma about the prospects of the kingdom.

The vital element in this apocalyptic phase of the theology which the gospels present as an embodiment of what Jesus thought and believed, is not simply a heroic faith in the power of God to carry out His purpose of regeneration and redemption for men amid conditions which intimidated and discouraged all but the most ardent souls on earth. It is that. *When these things begin*—physical catastrophes, supernatural terrors, national convulsions —*take heart and lift up your heads, for your redemption is drawing near*.[1] But it is more than that. This confidence in the power and goodness of God is bound up with the person of Jesus Christ. The eschatological hope anticipates a future in which the bliss and relief are mediated through the divine Christ; God is to reign over a people for whom Jesus has given His life as a ransom, for whom He has shed His blood, to bring them into the new relationship of sons to the heavenly Father. Finally, the future hope lays a moral obligation upon those

[1] Luke xxi. 28.

who cherish it. Ethical excellence does not win the kingdom, but without the ethical temper of unworldliness it cannot be received. *Take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be overlaid by debauchery and drunkenness and worldly cares, and so that Day come on you suddenly like a snare. For come it will on all who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Be watchful and pray at every season that you may have strength to escape all that is coming to pass, and to stand in presence of the Son of man.* It is the eschatological hope which supplies at least the motive for the counsels to watchfulness and zeal during the interval of waiting. The developing theology of the gospels shows how the early Christians gradually became sensible that faith in God and in the future was not necessarily bound up with this or any other apocalyptic expectation; but, even in transcending the primitive eschatology, they carry on the religious and ethical instinct which it embodied; they attest the fact that the attitude of Jesus to the future kingdom meant neither a purely supernatural deity, nor an attitude of passive unethical expectancy upon the part of men, nor an order of things in which His own person was transcended.

But, while this process of reflection is carried out most fully in the Fourth gospel, the synoptic gospels reveal the antinomy of the present and the future within the consciousness of Jesus—an antinomy, without which the subsequent developments of the primitive Christian theology are inexplicable. The kingdom is to be inherited and entered when He returns. That is the one side, attested by a score of sayings. The other side is that God's reign has begun with His messianic mission, that it is not

simply imminent but actually inaugurated in measure. This consciousness of the present era as the climax of the past and the beginning of a glorious future is expressed or implied in a whole series of passages, but one of the most explicit is the beatitude (Matt. xiii. 16-17=Luke x. 23-4) of Q—

Blessed are your eyes for they see,
and your ears for they hear :
I tell you,
many prophets and just men have desired to see
what you see,
but have not seen it :
and to hear what you hear,
but have not heard it.

There is nothing here of the 'ulteriōris ripae amor,' which, according to the rigid eschatological theory, was the mood invariably inculcated by Jesus. He felicitates the disciples on the revelation of God which they were privileged to enjoy in their intercourse with Himself, here and now. It was an experience which, as He elsewhere urges, carried rich promise for the future of the kingdom, but it was none the less a present reality; the disciples saw the fulfilment in Jesus of the long-expected redemption of God, and heard the notes of the final message of good news for man. This is a word which shows the new era had begun with Jesus; it is not merely that He was in the future to herald the Reign of the Father, but that already He was inaugurating it by His presence and vocation among men. The consciousness of God and of God's purpose which breathes in a saying like this, reveals a range of mind which is deeper and wider than any apocalyptic

theory of the gospel can embrace. Such a conception of the messianic kingdom betrays an originality and independence which throws a pencil of light on a number of other passages, and the problem is to harmonise it psychologically with the cross-light thrown by the futuristic sayings.

(i) The first explanation of such an antinomy, which occurs to the mind of a modern critic, is that it must be due to the differences between the religion of Jesus and the later standpoint of the apostolic churches which more or less deliberately moulded the tradition of that religion to the current interests and preconceptions of the day. The influence of this factor may be traced in various directions, without much trouble. It is clear that the gospels have not only laid special stress upon some eschatological sayings, but 'eschatologised' others which originally had no reference to the future. (*a*) The incorporation of the small apocalyptic tract in Mark xiii.=Matt. xxiv.; (*b*) the eschatological setting and shape given by Matthew to the saying on the Way (vi. 13), and to the (vii. 21) word about the formal use of 'Lord, Lord,' whose original reference is preserved by Luke (vi. 46); (*c*) the saying about the first and the last, which has been changed in the course of transmission from a law of the present life (connecting with the situation of Mark ix. 35 f. Luke xxii. 26) into details of the eschatological future; (*d*) the homiletic application of the reference to Jonah (Matt. xii. 40);[1] (*e*) finally, the

[1] This, like the sharpening of the prediction about rising on the third day, or after three days, is apostolic; it also marks the beginning of the tendency to elaborate the *descensus ad inferos*, which otherwise has no place in the theology of the gospels.

eschatological turn given by Luke (xviii. 1 ff.) to the parable of the widow and the judge, which seems originally to have inculcated the duty of constant prayer, but, perhaps owing to the word 'avenge,' to have been adapted to a special situation of the early church;—these are only specimens of the process at work, but they will suffice to indicate its general character and motives.

A fair example of the opposite movement is afforded by Matthew's version of the beatitudes, which tends to bring out not only their spiritual but their immediate aspect more than is the case with Luke.[1] Most of the data which point in this direction, however, are special sayings for which there is no parallel in any of the other two gospels.

The likelihood is that both processes were at work within the early church. There are passages in the gospels where the intense belief of Jesus that the crisis would arrive suddenly and speedily has been smoothed down, or—if we choose to say so—spiritualised; there are others where the inwardness of His teaching may be conjectured not unfairly to have been somewhat narrowed during the course of transmission through the Palestinian communities. The evidence for these modifications is drawn ultimately from an analysis of the synoptic tradition which is rather hypothetical so far as it rests upon Q. We can hardly be sure enough of the latter's contents to enable us to say whether its eschatology

[1] Luke's probable omission of *Thy kingdom come* (in original text of xi. 3-4), apparently on account of its eschatological association, or because of the semi-political connotation which it might suggest to Gentile readers, is, however, noticeable, especially in view of his change (xix. 38) in the cry of the crowd at the entry into Jerusalem.

was of a less developed type than that of Mark. Such a conclusion assumes too readily that Q did not contain much if any of the material which happens to be preserved in Mark; besides it depends largely on the decision between the relative merits of the Lucan and Matthean versions. But apart from what is problematical on this line of reconstruction, it must be admitted that the movement of early Christian theology which Paul, for example, represents, *i.e.* the movement from a predominating to a subordinate eschatological interest, need not have been typical of the apostolic religion as a whole. Whatever date we assign to Mark, and whatever his relation to Q may have been, the probabilities are that the attitude of the early church to the eschatological tradition of Jesus was not homogeneous and stereotyped. The apocalyptic temperature would rise and fall, partly according to circumstances, partly according to the inherited temperament of certain circles. In estimating the effect of the early church's beliefs upon the words of Jesus and also upon the record of His ministry, it is fair to allow for the possibility that there was a tendency in some quarters to give an eschatological and somewhat conventional turn to the tradition, just as in other circles and at other periods the opposite drift would prevail. The latter tendency is apt to engross the attention of the modern student, especially in view of the culmination which is presented in the Fourth gospel, but the former is not to be overlooked, It is true that upon the whole there is a broad movement of thought, illustrated by Paulinism, from the more to the less with regard to apocalyptic eschatology, from the kingdom to

the Church as the centre of interest; but, as the history of early Christianity and the internal data of the synoptic gospels indicate, this was not by any means uniform. The more realistic and primitive view repeatedly found expression, and there are traces of it in the special modifications which Matthew and Luke more than once introduce into the tradition.

There are serious objections, however, to a position like that of Wellhausen on this point. He attributes the strictly eschatological emphasis to the later Church, and will have nothing to do with the theory that Jesus was bound up in an eschatological series of predictions. On the other hand, while he recognises in the parables, for example, distinct traces of the conception that the kingdom of God is a present reality, present in germ within the situation which the parables presuppose, he identifies the kingdom as present with the Church, and thus practically removes from the teaching of the historical Jesus not only the definitely eschatological element, but the complementary references to the present order of the divine kingdom. The weakness of this position is not that it recognises the influence of the apostolic church upon both sides of the preaching of Jesus; it is the dogmatic standard which Wellhausen imposes upon the historical materials. The Jesus who is left, after both of the deductions have been made which are considered necessary, is not a Jesus who by His teaching or actions could have given rise to such a movement as the early Christian faith. There is not enough left in His teaching or in His personality to account either for the visions which, according to Wellhausen, produced the belief

that He had risen from the dead, or for the forms which that belief assumed within the primitive theology.

(ii) The source of such antinomies in the preaching of the kingdom really lies deeper than any interaction of a primitive tradition and a later consciousness of the apostolic church. It was not the theology of the gospels which created them all; some of them, and some of the most vital, go back to the very consciousness of Jesus Himself. The element of apocalyptic eschatology cannot be eliminated from His preaching, and neither can the stress laid upon the kingdom as in a true sense present, like a germ, in His personal ministry among men. Unless the latter is admitted, no less than the former, the subsequent development of early Christian theology is not easily explained, and we are obliged to explain away with more ingenuity than historical success some authentic features of the mission of Jesus. It is a further problem to do justice to the presence of both elements within the consciousness of Jesus —a problem which belongs ultimately to the study of His life. Did the eschatological interest, it may be asked, belong specially to one period of His teaching? Was it mainly due to the influence of John the Baptist, and did He gradually reach a more inward conception of the kingdom through deeper reflection and experience? Or was the apocalyptic passion thrown up by the later experiences of Israel's obduracy? Did the earlier preaching of God the Father, and of the sonship of men through trust and obedience, give place, during the period after Cæsarea Philippi, to a definitely messianic propaganda which found its climax and heart in the near

future? A solution of the problem, on such psychological and historical lines, has been more than once attempted. The former hypothesis implies that the gospel of Mark has antedated the prospect of suffering in the record. This is not absolutely impossible; on other grounds it has been conjectured that the cycle of conflict-stories in ii. 1-iii. 6 belongs probably to the neighbourhood of xii. Both hypotheses are complicated, however, by the inadequate evidence afforded by the sources (as we have them) for any vital development of this chronological character. Neither can do more than furnish an approximate hint for the grouping of the data; the augmenting of the eschatological element after Cæsarea Philippi, for example, is obvious, but the element itself is not wholly absent from the previous teaching. Instead of distinguishing periods or successive phases it is better to allow for the varying emphasis laid by Jesus on different aspects of the kingdom. Less weight attaches to another hypothesis that the sayings which seem to denote any presence of the kingdom really express no more than the speaker's intense conviction that it was imminent, as if in saying 'it is here,' he meant to declare vividly, 'it is upon you.' This might apply to one or two phrases, but it does not cover all. It is not, in fact, upon the interpretation of a few isolated passages that the solution of the problem depends, but on the general messianic consciousness of Jesus, which has to be estimated from a wider range of evidence.

If any series of phases could be made out from the synoptic material, it would be on the lines adumbrated by Baldensperger in his monograph, *Die messianisch-apokalyptischen Hoffnungen des Judentums*

(1903) : a preliminary stage in which the conception of the kingdom for the most part resembled the ordinary apocalyptic view, then a phase during which it became more inward and occasionally even a present reality in some sense for Jesus, and finally a fresh presentation of the kingdom as transcendental and future. Baldensperger does not claim, of course, that these phases were definitely successive. They overlapped ; the point of view represented by the second, for example, in the central parabolic teaching, was not entirely absent from the first or the third. As we have them, the gospels probably support a theory like this better than almost any other, and the very appearance of complication which clings to it is a better proof of genuineness than the simplicity which the others claim. Life, as Jesus found it in the messianic vocation, with new ideals to realise and convey, was not simple. The complexity of the situation involved a changing emphasis on various aspects of the kingdom, and anything is better than to attempt an explanation of his experience by crushing it into a strait formula, or by regarding it as the undeviating pursuit of an eschatological ideal.

(iii) Neither is it feasible to argue that Jesus simply employed pictorial forms of thought and language, often drawn from eschatological tradition, to express His deeper faith, and that the evangelists not only misplaced some of these sayings, but often failed to do justice to their imaginative and plastic character. There is force in this contention, but it does not furnish a complete clue to the problem. The abuse of metaphor has certainly been one of the standing errors in theology : either

too much or too little has been made of it, in the interpretation of the words of Jesus. The Oriental picturesqueness of His teaching has often been ignored or minimised, with unfortunate results for the appreciation of His ethics as well as of His theology; and in the opposite direction, under the fear of modernising, we are apt to make serious mistakes by insisting that Oriental expressions in the gospels must be taken literally.[1] It is possible that even the evangelists were not free from the latter tendency, not because they were not Orientals, but because their standpoint was lower than that of the religious genius of Jesus. His language was often poetic and figurative. He frequently spoke in a popular metaphorical style, which was admirably effective for His purpose of impressing the conscience and imagination, and it is hopelessly prosaic to deduce theological inferences from such dramatic or vivid expressions. As the Old Testament prophets are enough to show, preaching in its highest reaches inevitably assumes an almost lyric or symbolic note; its aim is to suggest and inspire, not to use words of which it can be said pedantically 'this means that.' We can recognise this figurative element in such sayings as these: *If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you would say to this sycamine tree, Be thou rooted up and be thou planted in the sea; and it would have obeyed you—I came not to bring peace but a sword;* or, in another direction, in the vivid and passionate intensity which throbs under such

[1] There are some apposite remarks upon the valuation of Hebrew metaphor and allegory in Professor R. H. Kennett's *In Our Tongues* (1907), pp. 7 f.

concentrated demands as that a disciple shall *hate his father and mother*, or *let the dead bury their dead*. These tremendous requirements witness to the white heat with which Jesus, in moments of supreme tension, viewed the devotion requisite to His cause on earth. Or, again, when He exclaimed, with reference to the success of the disciples in their mission, *I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning*, the metaphorical note is quite audible. This does not mean that Jesus spoke of Satan and demons figuratively; the kingdom of God which as messiah he had come to inaugurate, meant the collapse of that hierarchy of evil spirits which He believed were in control of the present age. But it does mean that His language even upon such subjects must be interpreted naturally and freely, and that some of His eschatological utterances were vivid, semi-allegorical expressions which were never intended to be taken literally. It is too easy to literalise the symbolic or poetic element into an unreal estimate of what He said and meant. When the profligate son in the parable came to his sober senses and returned to his home, with moral penitence triumphing over false pride and shame, he acted upon his belief in his father's unwearied affection. By a moral act of trust he determined to cast himself upon the parental love from which he had foolishly and wilfully broken away. And, when he was restored, the terms of the welcome were: *This, my son, was dead and is alive again, he was lost and he is found*. It would not be safe to infer from this that the words, *e.g.*, of Matt. xi. 4 f. are to be taken allegorically. It is possible, but not certain, that when Jesus said, *The dead are raised up*, He meant the

quickening of life in the penitent. But some place must be left for this symbolic and pictorial element in the apocalyptical teaching of Jesus. When He said, *If you are willing to receive it, this is Elijah, who is to come*, He was enunciating a principle which underlay more than His estimate of John the Baptist. There was a freedom in the way He expressed current and conventional ideas, as well as in the way He recast them. To make allowance for this does not carry us to any final solution of the apocalyptic antinomy in His preaching, but it is one consideration which is essential to an adequate estimate and statement of the data in question.[1]

No one of these proposed solutions is really satisfactory. Each contributes some element, but neither singly nor collectively do they yield any valid answer to the question. Ultimately it is an historical problem, for a study of the consciousness of Jesus rather than for the theology of the gospels. The latter assumes both elements and correlates them with less difficulty upon the whole than a modern reader finds, partly because personal piety is seldom sensible of theological difficulties to the point of embarrassment, partly because the synoptic gospels at anyrate were composed mainly under the same time-view as that under which Jesus

[1] 'Our modern notions of Christ's eschatology are often based on an underrating of the extent to which He used material imagery, and of the extent to which He was absorbed—whereas His disciples were by no means similarly absorbed—in spiritual thought. . . . We Christians go wrong in poring over the apocalyptic imagery without bearing in mind that, if it came from Christ, it was used according to Hebrew prophetic precedent by One whom we believe to have been more spiritual than any Hebrew prophet.'—Abbott, *The Son of Man*, 3583.

Himself lived and thought. The vital point to be grasped, however, is that neither the apocalyptic nor the present emphasis can be ruled out of the teaching of Jesus on the kingdom. And if any psychological aid is sought in order to meet the situation which is thus created, the theology of Paul supplies what we want. It is instructive to recollect how this synthesis of the present and the future is corroborated by the religious mind of Paul. The apocalyptic form of eschatology which even to the end remains in the background of his doctrine did not prevent him from recognising that the kingdom was already a present experience of believers, through the Spirit of the risen Christ. The kingdom-idea, for him, is only one of several categories; it has not the central position that it occupies in the theology of the gospels. The 'family-aspect,' which is present in the teaching of Jesus, is developed by Paul, particularly in connection with his view of adoption. But he speaks of the kingdom as present in the authority of an apostle,[1] and of the kingdom as denoting righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Spirit, as the sphere of Christian service,[2] and as the position of forgiveness and fellowship into which Christians have already entered. The Christian hope looks forward to the appearance of Christ; the resurrection is not undervalued; but the period of the divine Reign has begun. 'God has delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of His dear Son.'[3] We have no business to assume that what was possible to Paul was beyond the reach of Jesus. The very fact that an eschatological background lies behind most of

[1] 1 Cor. iv. 20. [2] Rom. xiv. 17 f. [3] Col. i. 13.

Paul's sayings about the present kingdom emphasises the organic character of the latter to a religious view of the Reign of God, and serves to buttress the conviction that Jesus was not bound rigidly to a futuristic hope. Here as elsewhere the disciple is not greater than his master. If the primitive theology of the church succeeded in penetrating to some consciousness of the present kingdom, under the experience of the Spirit, it is an inversion of probabilities to deny that the mind of Jesus was unequal to such a range and depth of insight. It is necessary even to assume that the Pauline position must have been anticipated by that of the Lord in this respect.

Jesus, then, used not only apocalyptic language but apocalyptic ideas, at certain moments of His life. If we cannot, without arbitrariness, read all His teaching and actions in the light of an eschatological enthusiasm, we cannot, without almost equal violence, eliminate the realistic eschatological hope from the record of His career. At the beginning, as at the end, He was sustained by the belief that the kingdom was close at hand. This was the form taken by His faith in God's purpose of goodwill; it was not merely the form into which the early church, in the over-eagerness of its messianic ardour, threw His teaching on the kingdom. But the essential significance of the kingdom for Jesus is not to be found by interpreting it in the light of earlier or contemporary apocalyptic hopes. The kingdom varied even there with the particular conception of God or of messiah, and when Jesus took over this ancestral hope of Judaism, He modified it inevitably by connecting it with His pro ounder conceptions of God's nature and of His own destiny.

This transmutation of the idea gives the starting-point for the development which culminated in the Fourth gospel, by showing that the stress upon the inward and present aspect began not with the early church but with Jesus Himself. As Von Dobschütz has happily expressed it, 'in the teaching of Jesus there is a strong line of what I would call *transmuted eschatology*. I mean eschatology transmuted in the sense that what was spoken of in Jewish eschatology as to come in the last days is taken here as already at hand in the lifetime of Jesus; transmuted at the same time in the other sense that what was expected as an external change is taken inwardly: not all people seeing it, but Jesus' disciples becoming aware of it.'[1] The reasons for this transmutation lie in Jesus' consciousness of God as the Father and of His own Sonship. Both of these determine the conception of the new realm or reign of God which He came to inaugurate, and it is to the study of their meaning that we must now pass.

[1] *The Eschatology of the Gospels* (1910), p. 150

CHAPTER III

THE GOD OF JESUS

PHILO, the Alexandrian contemporary of Jesus, closes his treatise, *De Opificio Mundi*, with a summary of the five supremely important lessons which are taught by Moses in the Genesis-story of the creation. (i) To refute atheists, he teaches that God really exists; (ii) to refute polytheists, he shows that God is one; (iii) in opposition to those who hold that the universe is eternal and self-existing, he emphasises its creation by God, (iv) and also its unity, as the work of the God who is Himself one, in opposition to speculations about a plurality of worlds; (v) finally, we learn the truth of providence, 'for it must needs be that the Maker should duly care for what He has made, just as parents take thought for their children.' Jesus never called God the creator. He believed the Genesis-tradition, as is evident from His references to sex and the sabbath, but He generally states in other forms the moral and religious significance which attaches to the doctrine of creation. God is the Father, for Jesus, but not because He is creator. The truth of the divine providence is connected specifically with the Fatherly interest of God. Jesus assumes the Jewish belief in the existence and the unity of God; He did not require to teach men that God forgave sins, and His teaching contains no theories about

creation; He never had to argue with people who denied the power or righteousness of God.[1] The stress of His teaching falls on the practical issues of belief in God as the Father of men.

(*a*) The first of these is that the Father cares for their interests. Thus, in the very act of insisting that His disciples must subordinate every other consideration to the interests of the divine kingdom, Jesus assures them that God the Father is not indifferent to such matters as their food and clothing. *Your Father knows that you need these; only seek his kingdom and they shall be added to you.*[2] The very dangers and deaths which may be encountered in the Christian mission lie within His fatherly providence:—

Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?
Yet not one of them drops to the ground without your Father.
Fear not, then: you are of far more value than sparrows.[3]

This is a belief which dominates the central conception of God's relation to men, in the theology of the gospels. But it neither absolves men from legitimate activity in the matter of providing for themselves, nor from prudence in safeguarding life against normal dangers. By His actions as well as by His teaching, Jesus shows that this unswerving trust in God as the Father implies a use of ordinary

[1] The omniscience of God is assumed, but in the religious sense of Matt. vi. 4, 6, 18 (cf. ver. 32), not as a dogma.

[2] Luke xii. 31.

[3] So Wellhausen on Matt. x. 31, arguing that πολλῶν is a mistranslation of the Aramaic original as above rendered.

means to secure one's livelihood, and a recourse to reasonable precautions in order to ensure one's personal safety. It does not justify carelessness or presumption. The doctrine of the divine providence, which is implicit and explicit in the gospels, is not a premium put on the recklessness even of good men. A concrete example of this is afforded by the refusal of Jesus to be deterred from His mission by the reported threat of Herod to murder Him (Luke xiii. 31 f.). He replied, *Go and tell that fox, Behold I cast out demons and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, . . . to-day and to-morrow and the next day I must go on. The third day I shall be perfected.* The providence of God is over Him until His mission is accomplished. But it is not accomplished without suffering. With a touch of deep irony, He adds: *For it is impossible that any prophet should perish except in Jerusalem.* The Holy City must retain its monopoly of killing the messengers of God! Nevertheless, even this fate is part of God's providence, since without it the divine work of Jesus could not be accomplished. He believes in this providence and has courage to face risks in carrying out God's purpose, but at the same time, as His withdrawal from Galilee and His precautions before the Last Supper show, this is perfectly consonant with a careful avoidance of needless dangers. *When they persecute you in one city,* He told His disciples similarly, *flee to another.*[1] But the clearest

[1] Matt. x. 23. This text was abused in the later church by weak-kneed Christians who, in times of persecution, as Tertullian caustically remarked (*de Corona*, i.), thought there was no word equal to it in the gospel. The best comment on the verse is Acts xvii. 10, 14.

statement of the principle involved is presented by the temptation-narrative in Matt. iv. 5-6, where Jesus refuses to presume upon the providence of God by thrusting Himself into dangerous positions, and expecting God to intervene on His behalf. The point is that in order to believe in God's providential care, it is not necessary to claim arbitrary proofs of it. The first temptation is to abuse the feeling of independence which comes from the consciousness of divine sonship, by claiming exemption from the ordinary duty of relying upon God's goodness in the sphere of natural wants; the second is, to abuse the feeling of dependence by an arbitrary test of God's willingness to intervene miraculously on behalf of those who are in peril. Jesus believed God's angels had charge of the faithful. But He declined to presume on this belief in providence; He felt that the more genuine it was, the less it would look for such exceptional proofs of the divine interest.

The same thought recurs in Matt. xxvi. 53, and again in connection with the function of angels in providence. The popular belief in angels, which Jesus shared, is most prominent in the birth-stories of Matthew and Luke. Mark has comparatively few allusions to them, and there is little special development of the belief in the other gospels; while Matthew's[1] special parables, like Luke's (xv. 10, xvi. 22), mention angels (xiii. 39, xxv. 41), and while an angel appears in connection with the resurrection (xxviii. 2, 5),[2] Luke twice in one passage (xii. 6-9) substitutes *the angels of God* for the original

[1] The saying in xviii. 10 is the only other allusion peculiar to this gospel. It is a reference to guardian angels.

[2] Cf. John xx. 12 for a different tradition.

My Father in heaven (Matt. x. 29-33). The reticence of the Fourth gospel upon angels is connected with its omission of any reference to demons. So far as the synoptic tradition is concerned, the function of angels in the life of Jesus is confined to their support in crises (Mark i. 13, Luke xxii. 43); they are to be His agents and retinue in the final establishment of the kingdom, but they play a noticeably small rôle in mediating between men and God, compared with their corresponding functions in Judaism. The direct and deep faith of Jesus in God as the Father tended to confine the operations of providence and the mediation of revelation to His immediate contact with men.[1]

(*b*) A further outcome of this fundamental belief in God's fatherly providence is the conviction that He is able to see His purpose through, and to ensure the success of His cause in the world. The relation of the Father to the order of the universe implies that this spiritual aim will be effected, and this purpose of the kingdom is brought out in three ways.

(i) 'Faith,' says Mazzini, 'requires a purpose that shall embrace life as a whole, that shall concentrate all its manifestations, and either direct its various energies or subordinate them to the control of a single activity; it requires an earnest, unshaken belief that the purpose will be attained, a profound conviction of a mission and the obligation to fulfil that mission, *and the consciousness of a supreme power that watches over the believer's progress to the goal.* These elements are indispensable. Where any

[1] It is by angels that God's will is done in heaven (Matt. vi. 10), and the condition of Christians at the resurrection is to be angelic (Mark xii. 25), *i.e.* according to Luke (xx. 36), immortal as well as unmarried.

one of them is lacking, we may have a sect, a school, a political party, but not a faith, not an hourly self-sacrifice for the sake of a great religious ideal.' The words which I have italicised point to a religious conviction which finds expression in the Fatherhood of God as represented by the teaching of Jesus. There is no doctrine of God's omnipotence,[1] in the sense of later dogma, but there is an equivalent for it which meets the moral and spiritual needs of faith. This is expressed in the saying, *I praise thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that while thou hast concealed this from the wise and shrewd, thou hast revealed it to the children.*[2] Here the words *Lord of heaven and earth* are not an otiose or formal epithet; they are intended to suggest that the fatherly purpose of God in Jesus Christ has the full power and force of the universe behind it; it is effective in the natural order. This invocation of Jesus guarantees that the God on whom Christians rely for their personal faith is adequate to carry out the divine purpose to which they are committed by their self-surrender. The God of Jesus has control of the natural powers by which Christians are surrounded and apparently thwarted here and there. The Father is 'Lord of heaven and earth,' and as such He is competent to have His will done on earth as in heaven. According to the teaching of Jesus, our faith in God the Father justifies us in believing that in the mysterious world of Nature an absolute value

[1] Note the context of the saying, *With God all things are possible* (Matt. xix. 26). The will or plan of God can be thwarted (Luke vii. 29-30); there is no determinism about it. *How often I would . . . and you would not!*

[2] Matt. xi. 25.

attaches to our personalities, as they are directed to the ends of God. The theology of the gospels, in this respect true to the teaching of our Lord, is interested in creation mainly from such a practical point of view. There is no attempt to explain the dualism of God and evil. The final triumph of God is assumed, as the religious basis of the eschatological hope.

(ii) This hope of the good time coming, when the power of the Father will come fully into play, was vital to the faith of Jesus. He whose will is done in heaven by the angels is willing and able to have it done also upon earth, and this effective climax is the outcome of His redeeming providence in the present. On the one hand, it was the aim of Jesus to create and foster in His disciples the character which corresponded to the future realm and reign of God the Father; purity of heart, brotherly love, a forgiving spirit, and genuine humility, He taught, were the qualities which gave men a title to the bliss of the reign to come. Again, one of the motives for courage and hope, under the stress of the present evil order, was the conviction that it was temporary; the Father would ere long vindicate His loyal sons. Similarly, the renunciation of the world for the sake of a higher devotion to the interests of the Reign, was represented as sure of a reward in the shape of fuller life. The underlying thought is that the Fatherhood of God means a royal authority. To be His sons is to be sons (Matt. viii. 12, etc.) of the kingdom, *i.e.* members of the heavenly order which it is His will to realise. There is no opposition between the fatherly kindness of God and the divine kingship in the gospels; the latter is an

aspect of the former. Belief in God the Father involved confidence in His supreme power over the universe, and this found expression in the conception of His reign.[1] He who was Lord of heaven, where His will was done by the spiritual beings of the upper order, would prove Lord of earth as well, through the fulfilment of His royal purpose of love for men through Christ.

(iii) Another line of suggestion is afforded by the place assigned to miracles in connection with the personality of Jesus. The real aim of His healing-miracles was to induce the reverent recognition of God's power as manifested in Himself; thus the Samaritan leper, when he saw he was cured, returned *glorifying God . . . and giving him* (*i.e.* Jesus) *thanks* (Luke xvii. 15-16). These works of healing represent the pity and power of God exercised upon men; they are cures which are meant to deepen faith in the merciful and strong character of the Father, whose kingdom Jesus has come to establish. Furthermore, the miracles which are conditioned by faith in the recipient of the divine benefits [2] witness to the truth that the reign of God concerns the physical as well as the spiritual well-being of men, and that the goodwill of the Father

[1] Cf. Titius, *Der Paulinismus*, pp. 32 f. ('Orientals do not recognise our sharp distinction between the family and the state-organisation. . . . The distinction between family and kingdom must be entirely ignored in connection with the mind and preaching of Jesus').

[2] That is, according to the usual synoptic tradition. In the Fourth gospel the σημεῖα elicit faith rather than presuppose it; they are what an ancient writer would have called ἀρεταὶ θεοῦ, demonstrating the divine 'glory' of Christ for the sake of producing faith in Himself.

embraces all sides of human nature (cf. Matt. xi. 4 f.), with the power of reaching and healing it at every point. The distinction between these healing miracles and the Nature-miracles is unreal, from the standpoint of the gospels. The diseases and disorders which Jesus cured, as part of His work for the Father's kingdom, belonged to the phere of Nature over which God ruled for the benefit of His people. The apologetic value, therefore, of the so-called Nature-miracles was the demonstration that the God who produced spiritual miracles upon the souls of men had at His command the powers of the universe.

The relation of God's providence to the natural order is illustrated not only by the 'miracles,' however, but by the direct teaching of our Lord. It is significant that the God of Jesus is vividly present in the simple processes of Nature. To the theology of the gospels, as distinguished from the lurid conception of the main apocalypses and from the average rabbinic doctrine, Nature is instinct with the divine Spirit. The world of what moderns call inanimate Nature is not profane to Jesus, and this is a dominant note in His teaching upon the character of God.

Observe how the flowers of the field grow! They neither toil nor spin;
Yet, I tell you, even Solomon in all his grandeur was not robed like one of these.
And if God so clothes the grass of the field which to-day is and to-morrow is thrown into the oven,
O men of little faith, shall he not much more clothe you? [1]

[1] Matt. vi. 28 f.

This recalls the older appeal of the psalmists to Nature as a proof of the divine goodness, but it stands out from contemporary Judaism in its distinctive appreciation of the religious as well as the æsthetic side of the world. 'Almost all Christ's moral precepts might be paralleled or illustrated by something in Hebrew or Jewish literature. This praise of the beauty of flowers cannot, apparently, be so paralleled. And it helps Christians to approximate to a realisation of the spiritual attitude of Christ's conception of beauty and glory in the moral world. Of all Christ's sayings it is the most original.'[1] Another passage in the Sermon on the Mount points to the same belief in the living God of Nature :—

Swear not by heaven,
For it is God's throne :
Neither by the earth,
For it is the footstool of his feet.[2]

This prohibition of careless swearing is characteristic of the best Jewish piety, and the phrasing of the saying itself suggests a verbal reminiscence of the post-exilic oracle in Isaiah lxvi. 1-2 :

Thus saith Yahveh : Heaven is my throne,
And the earth is my footstool.
What house then would you build for me,
And what place of habitation ?

Only, we notice that Jesus does not use these words in order to prove that God does not dwell in houses made by hands. As a matter of fact, He assumes God's presence in the temple—His Father's house (cf. Luke ii. 49)—on a later occasion when He

[1] Dr. E. A. Abbott, *The Son of Man*, p. xiv. and 3565 d.
[2] Matt. v. 34-35.

again refers to the contemporary abuse of oaths (Matt. xxiii. 22) :

Does not a man who swears by the temple swear also by him who inhabits it ?
And does not he who swears by heaven swear by God's throne and by him who is seated on it ?

The saying is another glimpse of the directness and inwardness with which He viewed the earth as God's earth, for all its evil and pain. Nothing is more remote from the teaching of the gospels than a deistic view of the world.[1] Even the lurid tinge which apocalyptic eschatology imparted to some of the later predictions does not remove the deeper aspect of the living Father as present in the world of men and things, to bless the former and in their interests to control the latter. It is much the same intuitive feeling which Browning voices through his *Luria* :—

'My own East!
How nearer God we were! He glows above
With scarce an intervention, presses close
And palpitatingly, his soul o'er ours:
We feel him, nor by painful reason know!
All changes at his instantaneous will,
Not by the operation of a law
Whose maker is elsewhere at other work.
His hand is still engaged upon his world—
Man's praise can forward it, man's prayer suspend,
For is not God all-mighty? To recast
The world, erase old things and make them new,
What costs it him? So, man breathes nobly there.'

[1] Cf. *e.g.* John v. 17. The difficulty of reconciling the problem of God with Nature, and of explaining the relation between an absolute, spiritual being and the material creation, which vexed the soul of the later gnostics, is not directly present to the theology of the gospels.

'His hand is still engaged upon His world.' The gospels present the life of God in the natural world as active on behalf of His moral and spiritual interests in human life. His control of Nature permits the full growth of the human soul into His own likeness, and the full accomplishment of His redeeming purpose in this universe of pain and suffering and sin.

It is at this point that the theology of the gospels anticipates a modern problem of the religious consciousness, the difficulty of believing in a transcendental God who is great and high, and at the same time of trusting in a God who is present in the most intimate life of the soul. According to the gospels, the immanence of God is not confined to Nature as opposed to human nature, nor to human nature as distinguished from the sphere of natural forces and elements. The Father is King and Lord of the universe, not in an external sense, but as creating and sustaining it for His own ends, and this implies that He wills to come into direct relation with those in whom these ends are to be fulfilled. Jesus teaches that the reign or realm of God the Father is the realisation of His will on earth as it is in heaven. *Thy kingdom come, thy will be done.* The spirit of this prayer means that the Christian identifies his will with the will of God, as directed to the realisation of the divine realm in this world, the realm being the life and activity of God's household. It is the same thought which underlies Christ's teaching, that when life is surrendered for the sake of Himself and the gospel it is truly won; men take up their life again, under this devotion to the great cause of God, and find that it is really *life* in the

deepest sense of the word. In other words, the renunciation of the lower self, with its narrow and particular ends, in favour of the will of God, brings a man into the closest experience of the living God, and at the same time reveals a divine purpose which transcends the finite sphere of human activities. From one point of view, as the Fourth gospel puts it (xiv. 23), such a man lives the life of God ; *if a man love me*—which, as the context shows (cf. ver. 21), implies obedience to the commands of Christ—*he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our abode with him.* This is not equivalent to any mystic absorption of the human personality in the divine. It is not upon the mere unity of God and man that communion with God depends. Such a view invariably tends to reduce communion to an abstract or impersonal relationship between either finite beings and some absolute essence of which they are so many differentiations, or between the dewdrop and the shining sea of deity into which it slips. The gospels represent communion with God in terms of sonship, which involves kinship and dependence. This conception practically carries with it the elements which a modern doctrine of Immanence is designed to conserve—the essential affinity of man to God, the sacredness and worth of the present life, and the nearness of God to man in moral and spiritual experience.

Thus the theology of the gospels is saved from the danger into which later theologies of the mystic type have more than once slipped—the danger of allowing the consciousness and contemplation of God to distract life from moral devotion to the interests of the divine service and kingdom. It

is based on faith in the risen Christ, and therefore this communion of God and man is regarded as mediated through the Son. Now, the condition of the presence of Christ is invariably obedience to His will as a will of service and fealty. *Go . . . and lo! I am with you always.*[1] One of the later rabbis is reported to have said, as a deduction from Malachi iii. 16, that 'two who sit together and are occupied with the words of Torah have the Shekinah among them' (*Pirqe Aboth*, iii. 3). Jesus, according to Matthew (xviii. 20), promises His divine presence to any two or three of His disciples who have met *in his name*. This is an anticipation of the Fourth gospel's doctrine of the indwelling of Christ, and elsewhere in that gospel (*e.g.* i. 14) there are traces of the Hebrew conception of the Shekinah or 'Presence of the Glory' having been fused with the Logos-idea of the evangelist, a fusion which was all the more natural as the Shekinah and the Memra, or Word, were sometimes almost indistinguishable. But the point of the Matthean saying[2] is, that the divine presence of Jesus not only corresponds to the older conception of God's nearness to the faithful, but is conditioned by

[1] Matt. xxviii. 19.

[2] There is nothing in the gospels which exactly corresponds to the mystical expansion of this saying in the famous Oxyrhynchite logion, which (in Blass's restoration) runs: *Wheresoever two are, they are not godless, and where there is one only, I say, I am with him. Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find me; cleave the tree, and I am there.* The divine presence with the individual saint is argued as in *Pirqe Aboth*, iii. 9; but the rest of the saying is pantheistic, as the gospels are not. Compare the description of the Christian soutar in George Macdonald's novel, *Salted with Fire* (p. 183), as 'turning up ilka muckle stane to luik for his Maister aneth it.' The thought, *quid interius Deo?* is otherwise put by Jesus.

devotion to His person and cause (cf. the context). The theology of the gospels might be described as the grammar and syntax of that personal religion whose spirit prompts the cry, *Father, Father*. The revelation of God which gave rise to this faith was the effect of the teaching and personality of Jesus. The distinctive factor in Christianity is not that He taught God was the Father of men, but that God was *His* Father; it was in virtue of this unique consciousness of sonship that He called men to come to Him and learn the secret of sonship, and He mediated the knowledge of it by His life and death and resurrection, no less than by His words. The teaching of Jesus on this point or on any other cannot be severed from His personality and vocation. He was the Son of God in order to bring men into sonship, by enabling them to lay hold of the redeeming love of the Father, and this required more than words.

At first, however, it is principally the conception of God in His teaching which is before us. Now, a religion may call God by several names, but there are titles for God without which it would not be itself, and for Christianity the supreme title is that of 'Father.' Its distinctive meaning as the characteristic description of God in the gospels is further brought out by a comparison of the current Jewish titles which Jesus either ignored or used sparingly. Among the chief of these were *The Lord* (ὁ κύριος), *The Blessed* (ὁ εὐλογητός),[1] *The Most High* (ὁ ὕψιστος),[2]

[1] In Mark xiv. 61 (the high priest's challenge), *Are you the messiah, the son of the Blessed?*

[2] In Mark v. 7, an adjuration of the demoniac. It is doubtful whether the Lucan use is a personal predilection of the evangelist, or reflects an occasional habit of Jesus.

or, under the influence of an ultra-reverential feeling, simply *The Name*[1] or *Heaven* (cf. Mark xi. 30, Luke xv. 18, 21, John iii. 27, for incidental traces of this usage). Once,[2] in the threatening prediction made to the Jewish authorities, he calls God by the Jewish allusive title of *The Power* (Mark xiv. 62= Matt. xxvi. 64),[3] possibly because 'He desires to warn the Jews that in condemning "the Son of man" on earth, they are turning God into a "Power," instead of a Father, in heaven, and are preparing for themselves, in the Son, not a mediator revealing the Father, but a judge seated at the right hand of the Power' (Abbott, *The Son of Man*, 3309). In any case, He does not speak of God as the Almighty. The Father's divine power, as we have already seen, is presented in other language with special reference to the interests of Christians and the kingdom.

A similar attitude characterises the teaching of Jesus with regard to the 'holiness' of God. The Lord's Prayer begins, *Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.* As the name or rather the character of God is *Father*, the prayer is for the deeper and wider knowledge not of His transcend-

[1] Cf. *e.g.* the high priest's confession in *Joma*, iii. 8, 'O Name, I have sinned before Thee, I and my house; O Name, do Thou make atonement,' etc.

[2] The gospel of Peter preserves the cry of Jesus on the cross as *My Power, my Power, thou hast left me*, but this is not necessarily a divine title; it may denote the higher spiritual power of His own personality.

[3] Luke writes *the power of God* (xxii. 69), either because he wished to avoid this unfamiliar synonym for God, or because he took the earlier phrase (as it might be taken, though less probably) as an equivalent for *the right hand of power* (δυνάμεως—an adjectival genitive).

ence but of His fatherly nature. Reverence for God as the Father is what Jesus teaches in this petition or aspiration. The sacred name for Him was not *The Holy One* but *Father*; it was as Father that God was to be reverenced and honoured. Jesus deepens as He carries on the conception of God as the Father, the Father not simply of the community but of the individual also, and of the individual man not simply of the individual Israelite. He is the royal Father of men, not because He created them, nor because He rules them, but because they stand to Him in a moral relation of kinship and dependence. But it is His Spirit which is described as holy, not Himself. The association of remoteness and ritual which had gathered round the divine name of 'holy,' probably accounted for Jesus' avoidance of it; the moral purity and passion which it denoted, were expressed by Him in terms of the Father's love as opposed to sin in man. It was His profound conception of the divine love which embraced what had hitherto been grouped mainly under the special category of holiness in the description of God's character. As the Father, God inspired, for Jesus, the moral reverence and humility which His holiness had elicited in Judaism, and not only inspired but deepened them. The fact that Jesus avoided this term accounts for its comparative rarity in the theology of the primitive Christians. 'Holiness' had associations which were inconsistent with their religious experience of God as the Father, and its valid elements were expressed in other ways. It is not unlikely, too, that the adjective was avoided as a divine epithet owing to the fact that the Greeks never applied it to their deities. The convert

instinctively felt that *heavenly* or *in the heavens* was more appropriate than the less familiar and less obvious *holy* (ἅγιος).[1]

There is only one passage in the gospels where 'holy' is definitely applied to God, *i.e.* in John xvii. 11. *Holy Father, keep them in thy name* (*i.e.* keep them faithful to thy nature and revelation of Father) *which thou hast given to me, that theirs may be a unity like ours.* The last words are reiterated throughout the prayer (ver. 20 f., 24 f.), and denote its special object. Christ's desire, according to the writer, is that His people may be kept from the divisive, unbrotherly spirit of the world; *Keep them from the evil one,* who rules with a spirit of hate the world in which they have to live and work. Their sphere is the relationship and attitude in which they call God Father, as revealed in Christ, and thus form a brotherhood on earth.[2] This passage is therefore an expansion of the thought in the synoptic Lord's Prayer. The term *holy* is chosen in opposition to that of the world, but the idea is not dissimilar to the Lord's Prayer, viz., that to pray for the Father's name being hallowed, implies absolute loyalty to His will, trust in His love, and—*forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*—a temper of unvarying forgiveness in the lives of those who thus call Him Father. In fact the term *holy*, in John xvii. 11, is probably an equivalent for the synoptic *heavenly*, which is never applied to God by the writer of the Fourth gospel. *Holy Father* is practi-

[1] Kattenbusch, *Das Apostolische Symbol*, ii. 687.

[2] This is the real life (ver. 17, corresponding to the true character of their God) to which he devotes them, setting them apart for its propagation in this world.

cally another mode of expression for *Father in heaven*.[1]

What is totally absent from this conception of God as Father, is the notion that any ceremony is required upon the part of man to render honour and glory to Him, or to thank Him publicly and formally for His goodness. The theology of the gospels does not know such a deity; it tacitly supersedes the older ideas of a God, to which such practices were relevant as the moral elements in sacrifice. The God of Jesus is to be worshipped, according to the Fourth gospel, as Father *in spirit and in truth* (iv. 23); He is honoured and served in a life which, inspired by His spirit, is faithful and loving in the common duties of this world. The externalities of ritual and ceremony, with their local circumstances, belong to the sphere of *the flesh*, which in the Johannine usage is the material and lower antithesis to the divine world of the spirit as the only reality. The basis for this conception of inward worship is laid down by Jesus in the anti-Pharisaic passage at the opening of Matthew vi. where the genuine ideal of *righteousness* is defined, in the sphere of ordinary life as well as of worship. Jesus requires a passionate devotion to this *righteousness* (Matt. v. 6, 10), and promises that it will be satisfied in the realm of God. He connects it with the realm of God, not simply as the requirement but as the atmosphere and content of that realm or reign (cf. Mark xii. 29-31). The righteousness and the kingdom of God are not only associated (Matt. vi. 33, *seek first the kingdom and his righteous-*

[1] This term, which is practically confined to Matthew's gospel, is allied to that of *the kingdom of heaven* (see above, p. 63). For arguments against its originality, cf. Abbott's *Son of Man*, 3492.

ness),[1] but by being brought under the common and supreme category of *life* are practically identified. What Jesus meant by the term which we translate *righteousness*, was the conduct and character which corresponded to the fatherly love of God (cf. Matt. v. 43 f.), and this meant a share in His own life.[2]

The outstanding feature of this *righteousness*, which differentiates it from any formal or legal conception, is spontaneous, ungrudging, unreserved love.

Love your enemies and pray for your persecutors,
That you may prove sons of your Father in heaven :
For he makes his sun rise on the evil and the good,
And rains upon the just and the unjust.[3]

Jesus prohibits any restriction of love and pity to those who are kind to ourselves. The doctrine sounds heroic to ordinary human nature, but Jesus does not present it as heroic. He grounds His demand upon the natural attitude of the Father, upon what Francis of Assisi called 'the great courtesy of God.' He assumes that men enjoy the benefits of rain and sunshine from the hand of the Father, and argues that a similar generosity must stream out from their hearts upon the undeserving. Love

[1] 'Righteousness' is one of Matthew's favourite terms, and in this passage it is uncertain whether the Lucan omission is not more correct. If it is retained, it denotes not the character of God but the moral and spiritual requirements which He makes upon those who are sons and citizens of His kingdom.

[2] The remark of Wisdom xii. 19 : *Thou hast taught thy people that the righteous should be a lover of men* (φιλάνθρωπον) occurs in a nationalistic passage, but it is based on the conception of God's gracious nature (ver. 12).

[3] Matt. v. 44 f.

is the absolute character of God, love even for the undeserving. The Most High is *kind to the thankless and the evil. Be pitiful, even as your Father is pitiful.* This is the Lucan parallel to Matthew's word—*You are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect*, as your love extends even to your enemies.[1] The moral claim is that the sons of the kingdom must reproduce in their own lives the spirit of their royal Father, especially towards those who have wronged them.

This conception of God's nature is interwoven with every fibre of the Christian message. It is illustrated by the identification of love to God with sympathy and service, by Christ's insistence that forgiveness and charity must not be allowed to stand aside on any pretext—not even on the pretext that worship has prior obligations. *Go and learn*, said Jesus once, *what this saying means: I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.* He said this to clinch His reasons for associating with the tax-gatherers and sinners of Galilee, a proceeding which scandalised the Pharisees; and this points to a second method by which the character of God was interpreted by Him. His welcome, extended to classes which were treated as beyond the pale by the religious authorities, was a practical demonstration of the divine purpose in its graciousness. The whole attitude of Jesus to sinners has a theological significance which tallies with His teaching upon God's fatherly and gracious

[1] It is in this brotherly love that the moral personality develops into the life of God. This is the motive of the higher 'righteousness.' It anticipates a reward, not in the sense of recompense which can be claimed for merit laid up by almsgiving and the like, but as the consequence and fruition of the inward spirit which aspires to the character of the Father.

love to all sorts and conditions of men. Jesus proclaims by act as well as word the holy love of God seeking out the sinful, welcoming the lost and harassed, restoring the penitent to God's favour, and assuring men of their place in the Father's heart. Now this message has presuppositions and consequences which involve more than appears upon the surface.

(i) The first is, the self-sacrifice of love in God as well as in man. A vivid ray of light is thrown upon the character of God by the terms in which Jesus passionately rebuked Peter for seeking to dissuade Him from going up to suffer and die at Jerusalem. *And he began to teach them that the Son of man must endure great suffering, and be rejected by the elders and the high priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He spoke of this frankly and explicitly. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him. But Jesus turned round and, seeing his disciples, rebuked Peter, saying, Begone, thou Satan, for thy thoughts are man's, not God's.*[1] The intensity of this reproof insists that suffering is in the line of God's heart and mind. Human feeling is apt to shrink from pain and death; it naturally assumes that these must be incompatible with the divine nature. Even Peter, who is forward to hail Jesus as the Christ of God, is shocked at the idea that his Master should dream of exposing Himself to ignominy and distress; his conception of the divine purpose cannot yet admit the idea of a messiah who triumphs through suffering. Jesus reverses his view, as untrue to the mind of God; *οὐ φρονεῖς τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων.* God's way is

[1] Mark viii. 31 f.

not the line of shrinking from self-sacrifice. To choose the path leading to the cross is *to mind the things of God, i.e.* to act upon His motives and to sympathise practically with His aim. When Jesus introduced into the conception of the apocalyptic Son of man the startling function of suffering, He was implicitly revolutionising the entire scheme of messianic eschatology. When He showed that He must go forward on this line, that it was the only divine course to take, the only course open to any one who understood the real purpose and method of God, He was giving an interpretation of the divine Spirit which controlled the kingdom.

If there was not for His contemporaries, there is for us, a dramatic significance in the very locality of this decision.[1] Cæsarea Philippi lay outside Judæa, and it was associated with more faiths than one. In the high red limestone cliff, from which the Jordan bubbled, there was a huge cave or grotto, sacred to the worship of Pan and the nymphs—a worship consecrated by the Macedonian Greeks, who had settled in the district after Alexander the Great's conquest. Pan, the god of green fields and grazing flocks, represented the joyful worship of the Greek world as it abandoned itself to the natural instincts of life. There was another local cult, however. On the cliff above the grotto a white temple stood, where the Roman emperor was worshipped. This temple had been erected by Herod after the visit of Cæsar Augustus; it denoted a form or phase of superstition which glorified pomp and authority, not Nature. Now, both of these contemporary religions were

[1] Cf. Dr. G. A. Smith's *Historical Geography of Palestine* pp. 474 f.

the antithesis of the religion which Jesus revealed to the disciples at Cæsarea Philippi, when He began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer and be killed, in obedience to the prompting of His God.

This is one of the most striking proofs of what Jesus believed His God to be. Anticipations of the divine nature as implying self-sacrifice and sympathy had been already voiced here and there both within Judaism and Hellenism, by the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, *e.g.*, by sayings like *In all their affliction he was afflicted*—which the finer faith of the rabbis dwelt upon with emphasis, and also, throughout the higher reaches of Greek and Oriental thought, by the contemporary belief in the dying and suffering god of the cults. These are glimpses of the light that was coming into the world in full splendour through the person of Jesus Christ. But how difficult it was to believe that the higher life came through dying to self, and that it is divine to bear suffering willingly for the sake of others, is shown by Peter's blunt remonstrance. He was shocked at the notion of the Son of God actually dreaming of anything so humiliating and unworthy as pain and self-sacrifice. The pageant of apocalyptic eschatology dazzled his eyes till they failed as yet to recognise where the true glory of life lay. It required the facts of the passion and the cross and the resurrection to convince the disciples that Jesus was right in His reading of God's character, and therefore He revealed the nature of the Father, not simply by telling men of His intuitions, but by acting as He believed in the line of God and pointing men, through what He did and suffered, to the essential spirit and motives of

the Father. The parables enshrine with unrivalled clearness the fatherly and forgiving goodness of God. But, as Jesus showed at Cæsarea Philippi, the deeds of our Lord—His entire vocation, His attitude to life and death—set forth even with greater vividness the real interests of God. *He who has seen me has seen the Father*, says the Christ of the Fourth gospel. That saying sums up the meaning of Christ's life as a practical revelation of God's character and purpose;[1] it renders explicit what is more or less implicit in the synoptic tradition, the divine, redeeming love which led up to the cross.

It was the sin of man, bound up with the evil of the world, which necessitated this utter self-sacrifice. Jesus had to overcome more than wrong views about God; He had to meet the sin of the world as a positive opponent of the Father. To Him the forgiveness of sins was the negative side of bliss or entrance into fellowship with God. It was by revealing the true character and realising the gracious purpose of God, that He sought to produce a genuine repentance, and on the other hand to reassure those who had a sense of sin. When, therefore, He demanded repentance because the kingdom of God is at hand, the conception of the kingdom determined the nature of the repentance which was required; the motives for the latter were found in God's fatherly love, with its corollary of brotherly

[1] 'A son may reveal a father in two ways: either by being like him—so entirely in his image as to be justified in saying, He that hath seen me hath seen my father—or by manifesting a constant reverential, loving trust, and thus testifying that the father is worthy of such a trust. Jesus revealed the Father in both these ways' (Erskine, *The Spiritual Order*, p. 250). The former is mainly characteristic of the Fourth gospel, the latter of the synoptists.

service, and both of these are represented in the life and death of Jesus; He lives and dies to bring them home with power to the conscience of men, amid the sins of worldliness and hatred which exclude from the kingdom.

(ii) The special and unique work which Jesus had thus to do, in connection with the purpose of God, implied a corresponding relation between Him and the Father. This topic partly belongs to the next chapter, but it is cognate to our present discussion, since the character of God as the Father of Jesus is the basis of the general Fatherhood which underlies the synoptic tradition as well as the Johannine.

The chief passage which voices this aspect of the synoptic theology is Matt. xi. 26-7:

All has been given over to me by my Father:
And no one knows the Son except the Father—
Nor does any one know the Father except the Son,
And he to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

The last word has to be supplied. The original has no accusative after *reveal*, and the object of the Son's revelation might include Himself as well as the Father. It is possible that the last clause thus refers to both of the preceding, as Irenæus suggested (*Adv. Haer.* iv. 6. 3, especially his comment on the phrase, which runs, *teaching of Himself and of the Father*). In any case Jesus speaks of God as His Father, and of Himself as the Son, in a specific sense. The saying at the transfiguration (Mark ix. 7) and some other allusions corroborate the view that this was not an isolated usage, which may be explained away in Matt. xi. 26-7 as the projection of a 'Johannine' idea into the synoptic tradition. It is the expression rather than the thought which

is exceptional in this passage. Jesus is here as elsewhere the Son, not because He is the messiah, but in virtue of a unique relation to the Father. It is through His consciousness of a distinct relation to God as the Father, that the consciousness of the messianic vocation is interpreted by the evangelists. Jesus is presented as the Son of God who has a divine calling to fulfil on behalf of men. He is conscious of His divine Sonship as He is conscious of this vocation to realise the purpose of God the Father for men. The latter was determined for Him by His relation of Sonship to God.

In the second century some Christians, like the Marcionites, used the aorist (ἔγνω) to corroborate their distinction between the God of the Old Testament and the God of Jesus. 'Those who would like to be wiser than the apostles,' says Irenæus (*Adv. Haer.* iv. 6. 1), 'write the passage thus: "No one has known the Father except the Son, nor the Son except the Father, and he to whom the Son has chosen to reveal Him," interpreting it as though the true God had been known by no one prior to the coming of our Lord, and denying that the God whom the prophets announced was the Father of Christ.' This gnostic reading is adopted for other reasons by several editors including Harnack, who also contends (*Sayings of Jesus*, pp. 272 f.) that the clause, *who the Son is but the Father*, was interpolated from Matthew into Luke (x. 22) at an early stage, and that the original Lucan text—which represents the saying better than the Matthean form—simply ran

All has been given over to me by the Father,
And no one has known the Father except the Son,
And he to whom the Son reveals Him.

But neither Harnack's facts nor his inferences in the textual field of early Christian quotations are beyond challenge;[1] the aorist ἔγνω is gnomic rather than historic, and therefore is not out of place in the canonical form of the text; even the omission of the second clause, though more defensible,[2] spoils the rhythm and balance of the passage. It has to be remembered that the consciousness of His messianic calling and character as God's Son had been a revelation to Jesus at the baptism. It was a revelation to Peter at Cæsarea Philippi—*flesh and blood have not revealed this to thee, but my Father in heaven*; though Peter failed to understand the full significance of the revelation. And to Jesus Himself it was a mystery. *No one knows the Son but the Father.* It was only through steadfast obedience to the Father's will, through prayer and temptation, that He came to realise the meaning of His Sonship for Himself and for men.

The bearing of the passage upon God's Fatherhood is that God was the Father of Jesus in a special sense, and that Jesus was conscious of a filial intimacy and communion which enabled Him to reveal God's character as none else could, and to realise God's redeeming purpose for the sons of men. There is no definition of the divine nature; there is no assertion of a metaphysical relationship

[1] Cf. Dom Chapman in *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1909, pp. 552-66, though it is not necessary to find the occasion for the thanksgiving in the neighbourhood of Matt. xvi., and to regard the ταῦτα of ver. 11 as the revelation of the divine Sonship. The general sense is paralleled by John v. 20 and vii. 16.

[2] It occurs, however, as early as Justin Martyr. The variations in the order of the two clauses do not seem of primary significance, in spite of Harnack's pleading.

between the Father and the Son. It is not until we reach the Fourth gospel that we get any definition of the nature of God. There (iv. 24) alongside of the Fatherhood of God we find the statement that *God is Spirit, i.e.* devoid of what is material, lifted above the realm of the flesh. But these words have a specific bearing on the freedom of the Christian God from any embodiment in a cultus: they belong to the general conception of the divine nature in the Fourth gospel, on the one hand, and on the other they fall to be interpreted by the conception of the divine Fatherhood. The God who is spirit is the Father. The usage of Father in this absolute sense, in the Fourth gospel, practically corresponds to the synoptic title of *the Father in heaven*, or *the heavenly Father*. It is hardly possible, without over-subtlety, to draw distinctions between 'the Father' and 'my Father,' on the lips of the Johannine Christ, and in some other passages it is an equivalent for the synoptic 'our Father,' a phrase which is absent from the Fourth gospel, where it is expressly avoided in one passage (xx. 17), in order to keep before the mind the unique Sonship of Christ, in virtue of which men attain to their position in the Father's household. The technical use of the phrase 'the Father' in the Johannine theology is due to the reflective element, which regards the religious sonship of men as well as of Christ as resting ultimately on the nature of God, who is the source of life. The kinship and dependence which are implied in sonship are viewed against a background of essential relationship. There is an approach to the older idea of fatherhood as creative, but at the same time the creative or life-giving nature of God as

the Father is pre-eminently exhibited in its religious and ethical aspects, and this controlling interest of the writer helps to prevent the so-called metaphysical element from rendering the argument abstract or speculative. Thus even the relation of Jesus to the Father is not stated in exclusively metaphysical terms.[1] It is represented as a moral and spiritual tie, in which Christ confesses His dependence on the Father: He remains within the love of the Father by keeping the Father's commandments (xv. 10, viii. 29, etc.), and the same conditions apply to men (xiv. 15, xvii. 6, 10). To become children of God, to come to the Father, is to have faith; and the course of the religious life is summed up in the pregnant sentence,

If you keep my commandments,
you shall remain within my love:
even as I have kept my Father's commandments
and remain within His love.

(iii) It is the fatherly love of God which also explains the new sense of joy and freedom breathed by Jesus into the souls of men. He gave them confidence in the character of God, especially with regard to the fears and hesitation born of sin. The Father did not view men as totally depraved; they were captives to be released from the slavery of evil, sick folk to be cured, wandering souls to be brought back to the father's household, disobedient sons to be reasoned with. The synoptic gospels contain no theory of sin. They show how Jesus viewed it as a transgression of the divine law, as a choice of the world in preference to God above all,

[1] Cf. J. Weiss, *Die Nachfolge Christi*, pp. 45 f., 54 f.

or as egoism over against God and man. He spoke of it as a debt, a disease, a defilement. It was punished by suffering in this world, and by exclusion from the presence of God in the world to come. Jesus had much to say about its punishment, especially in the case of the impenitent, and more to say about its forgiveness, about the willingness of the Father to receive the disobedient back again, about His unvarying love for His children even in their waywardness. He had little or nothing to say about the origin of sin. Beyond the fact that man was responsible for his offences against the law of God, and that sin arose from within, from the evil will or the weakness of the flesh, there is no direct clue to Christ's view of how sin came into being. He does not speculate, for example, upon the evil impulse, as the rabbis did. What sin involved is brought out rather in the sacrifice which its pardon required from Him as the Son; it is in its consequences for Himself that the seriousness of human sin becomes evident.

In the Fourth gospel the conception of sin is worked out to some extent. The thought of forgiveness is presented in terms of the giving of life eternal, however, rather than in the simpler synoptic manner, and this may account for the fact that an entire cluster of questions remains unanswered—how the Logos became incarnate, how the darkness originated which confronted the light in a universe created by God, or how the devil came to be the opponent of God. At one point the last-named problem does appear to be raised, in viii. 44 f., where it is said that *the devil was a murderer from the beginning and has no place in the Truth, for the Truth is not in him.*

When he tells a lie he is speaking from his own nature,[1] *for a liar he is and the father of lies* (or falsehood). When ἔστηκεν ἐν, which is rendered *has no place in*, is taken as an equivalent for *fell from* or *failed to keep his place in*, the Truth, a basis may be found for a doctrine of the devil's fall: but this interpretation is unnecessary, and there is nothing else in the passage to suggest such a mythological speculation, not even in the cryptic allusion either to the envy of the devil, which brought about the fall of Adam, or more probably to the murder of Abel. The only confirmation of such an idea would be the closing words, if they were rendered, as they might be grammatically, *for his father also is a liar*. This view was apparently taken by Macarius Magnes, who translates the first words of verse 44, *you are of the father of the devil*. It would tally with the Gnostic theory that the devil's father was a demiurge or archon, Sabaoth, the God of the Jews. Such an exploitation of Gnostic mythology, in the interests of anti-Jewish propaganda, would be entirely out of keeping, however, with the general tone of the gospel. To meet the difficulties of the existing text, it has been proposed either to change the subject after *the Truth is not in him*, and read—*when any one tells a lie, he is speaking from his own nature* (or, in keeping with his own family), *for his father also* (*i.e.* the devil) *is a liar*; or to restore the original reference of the words to Cain—*you are of Cain and are fain to do* his murderous desires (Wellhausen), etc. But neither of these expedients is plausible. The

[1] Dr. Abbott suggests that ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων here may mean that the devil speaks out of men as his family (*Johannine Grammar*, 2378, 2728).

Johannine idiom points to the usual rendering, *you are of your father the devil . . . a liar he is and the father thereof.*

Even in the Fourth gospel, however, where the dialectic used for the controversial purposes of the writing naturally tends to elaborate some of the antitheses connected with the problem of sin, it is remarkable that several of the specific allusions to sin are historical and apologetic. Thus both in viii. 21, 24, and xvi. 9, the primary reference is to the sin of Judaism in rejecting Jesus, the Son of God, as the true messiah. *You shall die in your sins, if you do not believe that I am* (He who is from above, ver. 23, the divine Son); this epitaph on unbelieving Judaism is filled out by the declaration that the Spirit of Christ will enable the disciples to show how the resurrection vindicated the character and mission of Jesus, by proving that the world was wrong in refusing to believe in His divine authority, and in condemning Him to death. The same idea reappears in xv. 22 f. and ix. 41, where the sin of Judaism in refusing to accept Christ is equivalent to the unpardonable sin of the synoptic tradition. Even in the argumentative passage, viii. 34 f., the primary reference is also apologetic. Judaism, by its deliberate enmity to Christ, proves that it has no vital and permanent place in the household of God the Father. Such unbelief is sin, *and any one who commits sin is the slave of sin*; slaves, unlike sons, do not belong essentially to the household. In fact, this deadly unbelief of Judaism identifies them with the household of Satan, the antagonist of God, and deprives them of any claim to be legitimate members of the elect household

in which Christ, as the Son of God, has authority. This latter thought widens out in the phrase, *if the Son frees you* from sin, *you will be really free*, *i.e.* vital members of the divine household, in full possession of sonship. The context of the phrase shows how this freedom is bestowed and received. *If you remain within my word* (*i.e.* within the element of my revelation of God, living in harmony with its environment), *you are really disciples of mine, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.* Freedom from sin, therefore, means the acceptance of Christ's revelation as a revelation of sonship to God the Father, which is bound up with faith in Himself. The sin which is contemplated is the special sin of those who deliberately refuse to avail themselves of Christ in order to enjoy the life of God. In a word, this sin is sin against the light; it can only be committed by those who are brought face to face with the final revelation of God in His Son Jesus Christ, and who prefer their traditional religion, or irreligion. Finally, we may add, this is borne out by the parallel antithesis in xv. 14-15, where Christ contrasts slavery not with sonship but with friendship. *You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, for a slave does not know what his master does; but I have called you friends, for I have made known to you all that I heard from my Father.* Here the intimate confidence which is the mark of the Christian experience and obedience is again mediated by he revelation of Christ.

It is the same conception of freedom, though in a less theological sense, that underlies the argument of Jesus about the payment of the temple dues (Matt. xvii. 24 f.), where He contrasts *the sons* of God

with aliens; the former, *i.e.* Christians, are 'free,' the latter, *i.e.* the Jews, are in bondage. 'The word "liberty,"' as Dr. Carpenter observes, 'does not occur in the first three Gospels. But the idea is everywhere.'[1] Whether viewed as release from the tyranny of Satan and the evil spirits, or as deliverance from the minute, vexatious regulations of the Law, or as a disentanglement from hampering scruples and doubts about the goodness of God, the kingdom as preached by Jesus lifted a load from the conscience of many. There is nothing in the synoptic theology which quite corresponds to the antithesis of Law and Christian freedom in Paul; even in the Fourth Gospel the freedom of Christ is rather from the material nature which thwarts the Spirit and faith. But the personality and mission of Jesus revealed a conception of God's nature which seemed like coming into the open air from a close room. He was a Father willing and eager for men's salvation, for their return to true sonship, for their release from the bondage and false freedom of sin. Jesus said, *The Son of man came to seek and save the lost.* Before Him, on this mission, the cross loomed, as the outcome of His work: behind Him lay the eternal love of the Father[2] for His own. The supreme obstacle to the coming of the Father's kingdom was the sin of the people; and repentance was the condition of receiving it—

'Only heart-sorrow
And a clear life ensuing.'

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[1] Dr. J. Estlin Carpenter, *The First Three Gospels*, p. 374.

[2] This is specially prominent in the Fourth gospel, with its emphasis on the truth that it is the Father who prompts and inspires the work of the Son (v. 30; vii. 17-18, 28; viii. 28, 42; xii. 49; xiv. 10, etc.).

This[1] is the thought of Mark ii. 10 f., that Jesus, as Son of man, has authority on earth to forgive sins as well as to cast out evil spirits. The Satan, whose agents possess the bodies of men, is also the tempter, and messiah's work is to pronounce forgiveness as well as to cure diseases, both being expressions of the divine will for men. Consequently, the death of Jesus, or the Son of God, is connected primarily with the forgiveness of sins, as the supreme boon of the kingdom which overthrows the anti-divine reign of sin and death. But even Mark's gospel which lays special stress upon the authority of Jesus over evil spirits, does not state the meaning of His death in terms of a victory over the devil. Man's rebellion and despair are to the fore-front, to be overcome by God's forgiveness. It is curious that the Fourth gospel, which omits all the instances of exorcism from the ministry, does connect the Passion with the devil (xiv. 30, xix. 11),[2] but this is due to the special pragmatism of that gospel; Judas, *e.g.*, is represented as possessed by Satan (xiii. 2) for his work of treachery. The conception of the crucifixion as the work of the evil spirits of this world, which Paul reproduces (1 Cor. ii. 8), is significantly absent from the theology of the synoptic gospels—a fresh proof, by the way, of their independent attitude towards the christology

[1] In some circles of contemporary Jewish piety, the messianic reign was expected only after a period of national repentance; *e.g.* in *Assumptio Mosis*, i. 17-18, God is to be worshipped in the temple 'until the day of repentance, in the visitation wherewith the Lord shall visit them in the consummation of the end of the days.' After the fall of the temple, this belief continued to prevail in rabbinic theology.

[2] There are slight traces of this view already in Luke (*e.g.* xxii. 53).

of Paulinism.[1] It is in Ignatius and the subsequent theology that the antithesis of the devil and God in the saving work of Christ becomes really prominent.

(iv) Finally, it is this revelation of love as the character of God the Father which involves the tremendous severity of judgment upon those who are guilty of the worst sin in the world—the sin against love, deliberate rejection of love as the one power of life.[2] It is to this conviction of Jesus about the Father that His passionate invectives against all who misrepresented God are due, as well as His warnings against those who deliberately trifled with the love of God, or with its costly expression in His own mission. The full orb of the divine Fatherhood, in the gospels, includes majesty and awe as well as loving-kindness. The modern sentimental view of the Fatherhood as celestial good-nature is wholly inadequate to the teaching of Jesus, either as regards the forgiveness or the punishment of sins.

The implicates of forgiveness are brought out in the tremendous saying (Matt. x. 28=Luke xii. 4-5): *Be not afraid of those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul. Rather be afraid of him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Gehenna.* Or, in the fuller Lucan version: *I tell you, my friends,*

[1] In the eschatological section of Matt. xxv. 31 f. the righteous inherit the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world, whereas the selfish and worldly are consigned to *the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.*

[2] On the Jewish scheme, the judgment formed an essential part of the doctrine of the Law. When the latter was replaced or restated as love to God, implying love to one's neighbour, the conception of the divine judgment was correspondingly humanised and at the same time rendered more stringent.

be not afraid of those who kill the body, and after that can do nothing further. I will show you whom to fear; fear him who has the power after death of casting into Gehenna. Yea, I tell you, be afraid of him. So Jesus judges the sin of cowardice, which amounts to a denial of God through the love of self. As the context shows, such a traitorous preference of one's safety and comfort to the interests of the kingdom is visited by exclusion from the presence of God. *Whosoever denies me before men, I will deny him before my Father in heaven.* The selfish and cowardly are disowned by the Jesus of whom they have been ashamed on earth. Once again we are thus brought round to the close connection between God's action and the power of Jesus Christ; the cause of God is bound up with the character and words of Christ, and the judgment upon unfaithful servants of the cause is represented indifferently as punishment at the hand of God, and repudiation by Jesus Christ. This is an outcome of the relation between God the Father and His kingdom. The righteousness of the latter involves the forgiveness and the judgment of trespasses, and this is what the mission of Jesus, as God's representative, signifies. 'The kingdom of God is the centre of all spiritual faith, and the perception that that kingdom can never be realised without a personal centre, a representative of God with man and man with God, was the thought, reaching far beyond the narrow range of Pharisaic legalism, which was the last lesson of the vicissitudes of the Old Testament dispensation' (*Encyclopædia Biblica*, 3063). The bearing of this truth upon the forgiveness of wrongdoing and rebellion may be illustrated from the setting as well as from the con-

tents of the parables in Luke xv. The tax-gatherers and sinners were all flocking to Jesus, and this aroused the indignation of the Jewish authorities. *They murmured, saying, This man welcomes sinners and eats with them!* The reply of Jesus is conveyed in three parables, only the third of which, at first sight, seems exactly apposite. The action of the woman who searches the house till she discovers the lost piece of money, and of the shepherd who will not rest till he has brought back the stray sheep to the fold, corresponds to a Jesus who seeks men, rather than to one who is criticised for allowing them to seek Him. Apparently, it is in the third parable of the profligate son, who voluntarily returns to find a welcome at home, that the full justification of the relations between Jesus and the local sinners is presented. Now, it is no doubt true that in the first two parables, as in the third, Jesus is primarily defending Himself. So far from being embarrassed or compromised by associating with the disreputable sinners who were attracted to His company, He declares that this is the real happiness of His ministry, a moral joy with which any one who understands the divine heart should sympathise. *Rejoice with me*, instead of criticising me. But inferentially He is defending the instinct which led these religious outcasts to associate with Him. Repentance, He argues, as a return to the love and law of God, is welcome to God just because it is the end for which God works and waits in human life. The point of the first two parables, where the initiative is represented as wholly God's, is that there is joy in heaven over a single penitent sinner. And the same note of joy is struck in the third parable, where the father

does nothing to induce the son's return. *Let us be merry, for this my son was dead and is come to life again, he was lost*—like the coin and the sheep—*and he is found.*

What Jesus therefore means to teach is the double appeal of God which motives human repentance. On the one hand, there are natures into which He requires, as it were, to break, in order to arouse them to their danger and loss. Upon the other hand, repentance may be stirred apparently without any direct interposition of God. The latter is the conception of the third parable; but even there the unconscious desires for a truer life, under the impulse of reconciliation, are the effect of the Father's Spirit working seriously on the conscience. The stress of the third parable is not to be confined to the latter part, in which Jesus deliberately answers the churlish attitude of the scribes and Pharisees as represented by the elder brother. The first part, in which the profligate son dares to return home and finds that his penitence is not presumptuous, is a shield thrown over the people who had ventured near to Jesus to listen to His revelation of God's love and pity. God the Father is ready to forgive; He takes sin seriously, and those who also take it seriously find He is a God who loves to pardon.

In either case, the motive of repentance lies in the character of God, and this is the new element which makes the teaching and mission of Jesus a gospel. When Jesus began His ministry, His message ran: *The kingdom of God is at hand, repent* (Mark i. 15). Even the call to repentance is in itself a gospel. It implies that men can really turn to God; they are not helpless automata in a world of unmoral deter-

minism. But the gospel of repentance, as Jesus proclaimed it, has still further claims to novelty. It was an advance upon any revelation of God even within Judaism. *Sinners drew near to hear him.* 'Surely,' says Mr. Montefiore,[1] 'this is a new note, something which we have not yet heard in the Old Testament or of *its* heroes, something which we do not hear in the Talmud or of *its* heroes. . . . The virtues of repentance are gloriously praised in the rabbinical literature, but this direct search for, and appeal to, the sinner are new and moving notes of high import and significance.' Only, it has to be recollected that these sinners did not merely venture close to Jesus to listen to Him. They were welcomed by Him to God. He associated with them, the Pharisees complained. His gospel of repentance was not simply an announcement that God was a forgiving Father, but a practical expression of what that forgiveness meant, in its moral obligations of loyalty and obedience. And this in turn involved still more. The death as well as the life of Jesus was necessary to the full disclosure of God's heart of mercy and welcome. The Father's dealings with sinful men issued in the sacrifice of Jesus as the supreme appeal to the conscience. Take a word like this: *If thy brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him* (Luke xvii. 3, cf. Matt. xviii. 15). The forgiveness which a Christian is to grant to his erring brother depends upon the penitence of the latter. But it is the duty of the Christian to induce that penitence by pointing out to the offender his wrongdoing, by bringing home to him a sense of

[1] Cf. *The Synoptic Gospels*, i. pp. lxxviii, 86; ii. 574, 985; *Some Elements of the Religious Teaching of Jesus*, p. 57.

his sin. He has a moral right not only to our forgiveness but to our rebuke. Now, what corresponds to that in the relation of God to men? *Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us.* In this prayer we are taught by Jesus to expect that God will treat us as we treat our offending brothers, and bring home to us our offences. *Rebuke him*; that is the first part of our moral responsibility to any one who has sinned. What is God's rebuke of us when we go wrong? What is it that we have a right to expect from God as the supreme inducement to penitence? The theology of the gospels answers that God the Father sent His Son to deal with this sinful state of men. It is the confession of the church, in the Fourth gospel, that *God so loved the world that he gave his own Son* to save men from destruction. The presuppositions of this belief are presented already in the synoptic tradition; God creates the very desire for forgiveness by bringing home to men what sin means to Him and to themselves, as a sin against love; and this forgiveness, with the judgment on which it rested, needed the sacrifice of Jesus to reach men fully. The details of this religious truth belong to the christology proper, but the fundamental basis underneath it is the inexorable love of the Father for men as interpreted through the Son, which the relation of the coming of the kingdom to the death of Jesus in the synoptic tradition brings out in one deep aspect.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERSON OF JESUS

'We modern theologians,' says Schweitzer,[1] 'are too proud of our historical method. . . There was a danger of our thrusting ourselves between men and the gospels, and refusing to leave the individual man alone with the sayings of Jesus. There was a danger that we should offer them a Jesus who was too small, because we forced Him into conformity with our human standards and human psychology.' What the sayings of Jesus indicate about His own person is primarily its epoch-making, its absolute significance for men. We have already (p. 71) found this consciousness of His supreme position in the great beatitude of privilege :—

Blessed are your eyes, for they see,
And your ears, for they hear.
I tell you, many prophets and just men[2] *have longed*
to see what you see but have not seen it,
And to hear what you hear but have not heard it.

In Matthew this follows a quotation from Isaiah, which is also cited in the Fourth Gospel, and for much the same purpose (xii. 39 f.), to account for the obduracy of the public, who are no longer the

[1] *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, p. 398.
[2] Luke substitutes *kings* for *just men*.

Galileans but the Jews, and also to explain, characteristically, that Isaiah the prophet had a vision of the pre-existent Christ or Logos. *These things said Isaiah because he saw his glory, and he spoke of him.* The latter conception had been already expressed in the phrase, *Your father Abraham exulted to see my day.* The Fourth gospel thus deepens and at the same time reverses the synoptic saying. The prophets and just men of the Old Testament had not simply longed to see the messianic day of Jesus Christ; they had seen it. The pragmatism of the Logos-idea enables the writer of the Fourth gospel to believe that the saints and prophets of the Old Testament had more than anticipations of the end; their visions and prophecies were due to the pre-existent Christ who even then revealed His glory to their gaze. *The glory of Yahveh* which Isaiah saw in his vision was really the glory of the pre-existent Logos, who became incarnate in Jesus Christ.

The theology of the Fourth gospel thus elaborates the truth that the mission of Jesus had been anticipated in the history of Israel. This is the idea of the saying in viii. 56: *Your father Abraham exulted to see my day.* It is the conception of Paul (*e.g.* Gal. iii. 16 f.), who also traces a messianic significance in Gen. xvii. 17; and Philo, before him, had explained (*De Mutat. Nominum*, 29-30), commenting on the Genesis-passage, that Abraham's laughter was the joy of anticipating a happiness which was already within reach; 'fear is grief before grief, and so hope is joy before joy.' But Philo characteristically avoids any messianic interpretation, such as the Fourth gospel presents.

There is another passage in the book of Isaiah where some prophet of the exile, describing his divine mission to Israel, exclaims :

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor,
He has sent me to proclaim release for captives and recovery of sight for the blind,
To set the bruised free,
To proclaim the Lord's year of welcome and our God's day of vengeance.

Luke (iv. 16 f.) relates how Jesus read this passage in the synagogue at Nazareth, as far as *the Lord's year of welcome*, when He stopped and began His address by telling the audience that this passage of prophecy was fulfilled there and then before them in His own mission to Israel. The omission of the last clause by Jesus is significant. As the later author of the Epistle to Diognetus put it (7) : *Was He sent to rule, to inspire fear and terror? By no means. God sent Him in gentleness and meekness, as a king sending his royal son. . . ; sent Him to save, to persuade, not to use force, for force has nothing to do with God.* But it is the larger conception of Christ's person and mission as the fulfilment of older prophecy, and as the inauguration of a new religious era, which is most prominent—a conception which dominates the theology of the gospels, and which is derived from the consciousness of Jesus Himself. The supreme significance of His work for men rests upon the unique relation between Him and the Father,

and this is expressed in the various titles which were applied to Him, or which He applied to Himself. A brief survey of these will suffice to give an outline of His person and functions in the new order of things which His mission introduced.

(*a*) The first is His divine Sonship.

According to the gospels the consciousness which Jesus had of His Sonship was a consciousness of purpose, a consciousness of being sent to fulfil the ends of God on earth. It is the good pleasure of the Father to give men the kingdom (Luke xii. 32), and this boon is mediated through Jesus, who reveals to men the true nature of God their King and Father, and dies to inaugurate His reign on earth. The messianic consciousness was the specific form which this sense of vocation assumed for Jesus, but it was determined and shaped by his inner consciousness of God's character as His Father and the Father of men. This is of fundamental importance, and it requires to be held firmly in order to see the relevant data in their true proportions.

The voice of divine approval at the baptism and at the transfiguration, which hails Jesus as the Son of God, denotes primarily His consecration to the will of the Father. But the consciousness of Sonship did not date from the baptism; otherwise it would be no more than His consecration to the messianic task which now dawned upon Him. His conception of the latter cannot be understood apart from the deeper relationship of His nature to God which underlay it. The salient feature of the baptism-stories, so far as the theology of the gospels is concerned, is that they denote the filial rather than the messianic consciousness of Jesus at the outset of

His ministry.[1] The functions of Christ in the kingdom are determined through His personal relation to the Father. He is messiah because He is God's Son; He is not God's Son simply in virtue of His messianic calling. It was His very conception of God as Father, as His Father in a unique sense, and as the Father of men, that determined His preaching of what the kingdom meant, and differentiated it from current conceptions, eschatological, rabbinic, and nationalist. This is the primary factor in the christology of the gospels, and unless it is assigned its full weight the ideas of the kingdom, of man, and of the world fail to occupy their proper focus. 'With the most careful and reverent application of psychological methods, it is obvious that our Lord's consciousness of Sonship must have preceded in time the consciousness of messiahship, must indeed have formed a stepping-stone to the latter. . . . In His soul the consciousness of what He *was* must have come first, and only when this had attained to the height of consciousness of Sonship could the tremendous leap be taken to the consciousness of messiahship.'[2] What is on the whole central, therefore, is the sense of His special union with the Father. The messianic consciousness is a modification of this, and no estimate of the aim and function of Jesus is adequate unless it allows for the fact that He was messiah and more than messiah, that His consciousness of service to God and man lay behind the messianic vocation, instead

[1] Cf. especially the Lucan version (iii. 21-22), which brings out the personal and spiritual experience underlying the new sense of vocation.

[2] Harnack, *Sayings of Jesus*, pp. 245-6. This aspect has been emphasised especially by Baldensperger.

of springing out of it, and that the very critical attitude which He took up towards current messianic hopes, transcendental no less than political, was due to this fundamental consciousness of Sonship to the Father. This is the fact against which the theories of rigorous eschatology beat in vain. When Schweitzer, for example, asks, 'What is there to prove that Jesus' distinctive faith in the Fatherhood of God ever existed independently, and not as an alternative form of historically-conditioned messianic consciousness?' the only answer is, *circumspice*. Unless the critic insists upon viewing the teaching of Jesus through a small, rigid glass of messianic eschatology, there are few things more luminous than the fact that the messianic vocation of Jesus has always to be understood as conditioned by His special consciousness of Sonship, and not *vice-versa*. It is the filial, not the messianic consciousness of Jesus which is the basis of Christianity. This is the conviction which determines the theology of the gospels, and it is also a conviction which goes back to the mind of Jesus Himself.

The voice at the baptism, *Thou art my Son, the Beloved, in whom I am well pleased*, blends the two ideas of the Son of God in the second Psalm, and of the servant of Yahveh in Isaiah xlii. Whether or not the second Psalm was originally messianic, as Wellhausen claims, a messianic significance was attached to it before Jesus in some circles of Jewish piety.[1] Though the use of *Son of God* to denote messiah does not seem to have been prevalent, it was not entirely unknown. But while it is applied to Jesus, in the gospels, it is never used by Him to denote His

[1] Cf. G. H. Box, *The Ezra-Apocalypse* (1912), pp. lvi-lvii.

own person. God is His Father, and the title *Son of God* is an inference from that position of divine Sonship, but He speaks of Himself as *the Son*, not as *the Son of God*,[1] as *e.g.* in the saying: *No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son, but only the Father* (Mark xiii. 32= Matt. xxiv. 36). This correlation of the Son and the Father is only strange when it is isolated from other allusions like—*of Him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father* (Mark viii. 38). The conception seems to belong not only to the primitive gospel tradition, but to Jesus Himself. So difficult in fact did the acknowledgment of ignorance on the part of Jesus seem to some early Christians that Luke, who elsewhere reproduces sayings of Jesus which employ *Son*, κατ' ἐξοχήν, in this connection (*e.g.* x. 22), omits the present saying, and puts a smoother version of it into the lips of the risen Christ (Acts i. 7: *It is not for you to know the times or seasons, which the Father has kept in his own power*).

Again, the consciousness of Sonship reappears in Matt. xi. 25 f.: *Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I praise thee that while thou hast concealed these things from the wise and shrewd, thou hast revealed them to the children. Yea, Father, I bless thee that such was thy pleasure.* Jesus is thankful that the true knowledge of God is not a monopoly confined to experts and exponents of the Jewish Torah, but, on the contrary,

[1] The Fourth gospel twice (x. 36, xi. 4) puts the title on his lips. The allusion in Matt. xxvii. 43 (*he said, I am God's Son*) is probably an editorial reference to Wisdom ii. 18 (*if the just man is the son of God, he will help him and deliver him from the hand of his opponents*).

that it is open to the unsophisticated sons of men. It is from another point of view that Paul argues (Rom. ii. 17-20): *You bear the name of Jew, you rely on the Torah, you boast of God and know His will, you are certain that you are a light for those who are in darkness, a teacher of children* (νηπίων)! The apostle is contrasting the inconsistent Jew with the moral pagan, whereas Jesus is primarily contrasting the professional authorities of Judaism with the humble and despised νήπιοι. Primarily, for in the parable of the royal banquet which the original guests despised, the ultimate guests are drawn from outside Judaism (Matt. xxii. 8-9). What Jesus emphasises here, however, is the accessibility of the divine revelation which He was conscious of mediating for men. He resented, on behalf of these simple children of God, the elaborate developments of Pentateuchal law which burdened the conscience and perplexed the soul (Matt. xxiii. 4=Luke xi. 46). Only, He is not merely championing their rights, as if He admitted that the scribes and Pharisees really had the keys of the Father's knowledge and kingdom. He claims for Himself the supreme authority in the sphere of divine revelation. The hope of these defrauded and despised νήπιοι does not lie in any reform upon the part of the authorities; it lies in His own commission from the Father to reveal the true and open way of life (see above, pp. 90 f.). Consequently, in the consciousness of this unique relation to the Father, He adds: *Come to me, all who are toiling and burdened, and I* (κἀγώ, emphatic) *will refresh you. Take on you* (this is the meaning and purpose of *come*) *my yoke* (*i.e.* the method of religion which I impose, in contrast to the Pharisaic yoke

of the Torah) *and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly in heart—and you will find your souls refreshed. For my yoke is not hard to bear, my burden is not heavy.* What enabled Him to confront the religious needs of men with serene confidence in His message and mission, was the conviction that He possessed a knowledge of God's character which was adequate to the situation. He knew the Father, as none else did, and He had the power of conveying this knowledge to others through His own personality.[1] It was as the Son, in far more than a merely messianic sense, that He called men to learn the open secret of His religion.

The supernatural position of Jesus as *the Son of God* in Mark's narrative, is explained by the birth-stories of Matthew and Luke as involving an absence of human paternity. To Mark Jesus is practically *Son of God* as messiah, who is invested with divine authority (cf. iii. 11), though it is improbable that the evangelist regarded Him as owing His divine Sonship to the reception of the messianic spirit at baptism. Whether the words *Son of God* in the title of the gospel are authentic or not, they represent correctly the standpoint of the evangelist. Jesus is a heavenly being, sent by God as His *only and well-beloved Son*, to accomplish the purpose of the kingdom;[2] and this

[1] The Herodotean saying (ix. 16. 8) ἐχθίστη δὲ ὀδύνη ἐστὶ τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποισι αὕτη, πολλὰ φρονέοντα μηδενὸς κρατέειν affords an interesting contrast. Matthew puts the call of Jesus to men immediately after the thanksgiving for the Father's revelation to himself; it is the latter which makes the former possible. Christ's knowledge of God was a power in itself.

[2] On the authenticity of the parable in xii. 1 f. cf. Professor Burkitt's paper in *Transactions of Third International Congress for the History of Religions*, ii. pp. 321 f.

is what lends point to the argument, *e.g.* of xii. 35 f. (cf. xiv. 61 f.),[1] as well as to the remark wrung from the pagan officer at the cross, *Truly this man was a son of God.* The evangelist means to suggest by the latter testimony the deeper sense of the title. What underlies the birth-stories, again, is the conception that the messianic consciousness of sonship is based upon a special consciousness of Sonship to the Father. This is the only adequate explanation of the deeper sayings of Jesus in the gospels which refer to His divine Sonship, and the development which the birth-stories chronicle is organic to it. They are naïve attempts to express the Christian sense of what was implied in the unique filial consciousness of Jesus, and even in grounding the latter upon a basis which Jesus Himself never mentioned, they both witness to the fact (or at any rate to the conviction) that His Sonship was more than messianic. Thus while Luke has the same Isaianic passage as Matthew in his mind (i. 31), he prefers to present the virgin-birth in terms more intelligible to Christians who were familiar with the mythology of the Greek and Roman world; and while it is Jesus the messiah whose birth he chronicles, he nevertheless chronicles it in a way that is not Jewish. The word to Mary is: *The Holy Spirit will come upon thee, and the power of the Most High will overshadow thee: therefore shall the holy thing which is to be born be called God's Son.* At this stage[2] the divine Sonship of Jesus is understood as an essential and unique relation

[1] Emphasised in Luke xxii. 70-71.

[2] Later on, the doctrine of the virgin-birth was used in the interests of the anti-docetic propaganda; but there is no trace of this motive in Matthew or in Luke.

between Him and God which is His from birth. The Sonship is still connected vitally with the Holy Spirit, though it is associated with the birth of Jesus, not with the baptismal experience. The tradition of the virgin-birth therefore embodies an apostolic interpretation of the divine Sonship of Jesus, which implies what a modern would call a metaphysical relation between the Father and the Son. It is not a relationship which Jesus ever puts forward in His teaching. Even the gospels which open with this prologue to His mission never represent Him as adducing it on His own behalf; they do not, for example, refer His sinlessness to it. The value of it, theologically, is that it confirms the conception of the divine Sonship which is presented by Q and even by Mark. It is a developed stage of the positive tradition, but instead of denoting the transmutation of an originally messianic Sonship into one of nature, it represents a more realistic statement of the latter. It is not inaccurate to say that 'nowhere,' even in the synoptic tradition, 'do we find that Jesus called Himself the Son of God in such a sense as to suggest a merely religious and ethical relation to God—a relation which others also actually possessed, or which they were capable of attaining or destined to acquire.' [1]

The theological significance of the birth-stories in Matthew and Luke is conveyed otherwise by the Fourth gospel. Here, the divine Sonship of Jesus, as *the only-begotten Son*, is not associated with His birth; His incarnation as the Logos is only a form of that eternal Sonship which He enjoyed with the Father as an essential relation in His nature. *The*

[1] Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, p. 287.

Son (of God) is not simply one sent by God into the world on a messianic mission, but *the only-begotten* (ὁ μονογενής), who is specifically related to the Father as a divine being (i. 18), akin to God in nature and at the same time dependent upon Him. Among the sons of God (i. 12, cf. x. 35) He is *the only-begotten* (i. 14, 18; iii. 16, 18). The author uses *Son of God* as a higher equivalent for *the Christ* (xx. 31); the phrase is applied chiefly to Jesus, whereas He applies the term *Son* specially to Himself—a conception which expands the thought of Matt. xi. 24=Luke x. 22. The Johannine use of the term, therefore, differs in two essential aspects from the Pauline. Christ is the Son of God with power, not by His resurrection, but by His incarnation—an advance in the latter idea beyond the synoptic view. Again, the pre-existence of Christ in the Fourth gospel is more definite and at the same time more inclusive than in Paulinism. It is messianic, but more than messianic; the prologue connects it with the Logos, and, as if to prevent this being confused with any ideal or abstract pre-existence, the pre-incarnate relation of Christ and God is described as that of Son and Father. After the resurrection the Son regains the position which He formerly held (*e.g.* xvii. 5).

In the conception of *Son of man*[1] the idea of pre-existence was already implied, but it is not present explicitly in the synoptic theology; here as elsewhere (see above, pp. 26-27) the idea remains in the background. What the Fourth gospel does is to develop a thought organic to the synoptic christ-

[1] Cf. Fiebig's *Der Menschensohn*, pp. 121 f., and Titius, *Jesu Lehre vom Reiche Gottes*, pp. 118 f.

ology, and to develop it specially in connection with the characteristic doctrine of the Logos and the divine Sonship. Thus—to take a single illustration—it is the supreme function of the Logos-Christ to disclose the real Name or nature of God, which He Himself knows as the pre-existent Son; but this disclosure is not the work of a mere mystagogue. The very context in which the technical term (ἐξηγήσατο)[1] occurs, indicates the atmosphere of the writer's thought. This disclosure is the spontaneous expression of God's love for the world; it is the Son who brings home to men the passion of God's heart for their sonship, not simply by acting for God, but by mediating the real life of God in His own person. The entire process of the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus lies within the fatherly love of God for men, and the latter is revealed directly in and through the mission of the Son.

(*b*) A similar transcendence of the messianic rôle is furnished by the place of the Servant of Yahveh conception in the consciousness of Jesus. In the baptismal voice (see above, p. 132) as elsewhere, the messianic application of Isaiah xlii. f. is taken up into the filial consciousness of Jesus as consecrated for the work of the Father among men. There was a partial anticipation of this synthesis in Ps. Solomon xvii., and it ought not to be forgotten that even the original Servant-prophecy was not quite devoid of messianic traits. The older messianic conception was indeed transcended, but it left some of its characteristic elements in the higher union, and the Servant retains, not incongruously, one or two subordinate features of messiah as a royal conqueror. 'It was natural and

[1] John i. 18.

necessary that the die, from which the coins with the royal stamp had proceeded, should be broken, the royalistic form of the messianic conception having become antiquated with the hopeless downfall of the kingdom of Judah; but equally so that fragments of the die should be gathered up and fused with other elements into a new whole.'[1] This formed a basis for that synthesis of the royal divine Son of the second Psalm and the Isaianic Servant of God which occurs in the baptism-voice. But the most distinctive feature in the use which Jesus made of the Servant-prophecy is His extension of the messianic significance to the prophecy of the suffering Servant in Isaiah liii. The point of the latter passage is that the extraordinary change in the position and prospects of the Servant proves a revelation to the nations. But a revelation of what? Of the fact that the Servant's suffering was due to their sins, not His own, and that it led to their healing. The remorseful chorus of the nations cry :—

He was despised, and we held him of no account.
But he bore our sicknesses,
And carried our sorrows,
While we deemed him stricken,
Smitten by God and afflicted.
Yea, for our transgressions was he pierced,
For our iniquities was he bruised:
The chastisement that brought us peace fell on him,
And with his bruises we have been healed.
We had all strayed like sheep,
We had turned every one to his own way;
And Yahveh laid on him
The penalty of us all.

[1] Cheyne, *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ii. pp. 216-17.

Jewish theology had already felt its way to the truth that the sufferings and death of the righteous avail to atone for others. It was partly deduced from this great Servant-passage in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, which was occasionally interpreted of Moses, on the strength of Exodus xxxii. 32. It was also connected with the martyrs, particularly after the Maccabean struggle. With Jesus it became a vehicle of the truth that as God's Son, in the special aspect of the messianic vocation, He must suffer for men according to the will of God. This rôle of the Christ had been partially anticipated by the Jewish faith which voiced itself in the passages upon the Servant of Yahveh. Whether the Servant was originally an individual or Israel personified, matters very little for our present purpose. It was as an individual that he was conceived by Jesus and the early church, and it is in this light that the sayings of the gospels are to be interpreted. Thus we read :—*They brought him many who were possessed by demons, and he expelled the spirits with a word and healed all who were sick.* Here the evangelist sees in the ministry of healing a fulfilment of the Servant of Yahveh's career : *Himself he took* (*i.e.* took away) *our sicknesses and bore our diseases* (Matt. viii. 16-17). Or, again, as we read in the Fourth gospel, *Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.* The Greek term (αἴρων) differs from that used by Matthew to translate Isaiah liii. 4, but it means practically the same idea. Once again (in Matt. xii. 16 f.) the Servant-passages are specifically applied to Jesus ; in fact, the identification of our Lord with Yahveh's Servant is one of the most notable features in the primitive apostolic preaching, especially as recorded in the book of

Acts. It was to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah that the early church, prior to Paul, had gone back for a proof of its belief that *Christ died for our sins*. This was the scripture, and the significance attached to it is profoundly suggestive. But a critical study of the gospels proves that it was more than the reflection of the early church upon this scripture. There is evidence to show that it was present to the mind of Jesus Himself, and that He saw in the character and mission of the suffering Servant anticipations of His own career.

According to the Ebed-Yahveh passages, the ideal community or Servant undergoes a purifying discipline of suffering which fits it to carry out Yahveh's redeeming purpose for the world. The Servant undergoes humiliation and agony, but his mission is glorious and his sufferings are vicarious.

Now (i) it is when this element of vicarious suffering, in the Servant-conception, is adequately estimated, that the basis *e.g.* for the drastic eschatological view begins to give way. Jesus, we are sometimes told (*e.g.* by J. Weiss, *Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes*, pp. 238 f.), began by attempting to create penitence throughout the nation, and thereby to prepare the people for the coming of the kingdom. But 'convinced that the kingdom could not come, on account of the inadequate penitence which His preaching had evoked, He finally determined that His own death must be the ransom-price.' The consciousness of this need, however, in the light of the Servant-prophecy, was not an after-thought. It must have been present to His mind more or less definitely from the first.

(ii) Again, it throws light on the truth that the death

of Jesus was a free gift to men, and that He viewed it as a voluntary sacrifice for their sake. This conception underlies the language of the acted parable which we call the Lord's Supper, when He took the bread and the cup, representing His personality, as dedicated to death, and gave them to the disciples. *The Son of man*, he had just said, *goes away as it has been written of him*—meaning that the Son of man was to fulfil the mysterious prophecy of the Servant of Yahveh who had to disappear from the earth by a death of violence, only to return in triumph for the accomplishment of God's saving purpose. Jesus freely yields Himself to this divine plan for the world. The Fourth gospel, in its own way, reproduces this conception (x. 17 f.), but it is present in germ within the earlier synoptic tradition, where the Christian is called upon to be ready, if need be, to lose his life for the cause, while Jesus gives His. It is the prerogative of the Lord to give His life for the sake of His people. This thought is presented in a twofold antithesis, in contrast to the selfish craving for life which might tempt Him to spare Himself the cost, and in contrast to the idea that His death was forced upon Him involuntarily. The former is synoptic, the latter Johannine, but the former also enters into the Johannine conception.

(iii) Furthermore, in the remonstrance of John the Baptist and the reply of Jesus, as recorded by Matthew (iii. 15), while we can hear the difficulty felt by the early church about the baptism of the sinless Son of God, the very answer is significant, as compared with that of the gospel of the Hebrews. When Jesus replies, *it behoves us to fulfil all righteousness*, He is identifying Himself with the people for

whom He came to live and labour. It is most probable that the underlying idea of the phrase is the consecration of the righteous Son and Servant to God's interests among a faulty and perverse generation.

(iv) Once more, it is important to recollect that the horizon of the Servant-belief is the world, not Israel. The Servant stands plainly between Yahveh and the nations, with a commission from the former to the latter. *He shall announce justice* (*i.e.* true religion) *to the nations . . . and in His name the nations shall trust.* This is definitely applied to Jesus by Matthew (xii. 18, 21), just as Luke (ii. 32) sees in Him the fulfilment of the Servant-promise, *I will set thee for a light to the nations.* The universal range which is implicit in the message of Jesus goes back to this element in the conception of the Servant. But it may be illustrated from another side. It is prosaic and unreal to suppose that when a word of the Old Testament leapt to the mind and lips of Jesus, He was conscious of its context. But some passages were plainly wells of revelation for Him, and since the narrative of the baptism proves that the second Psalm was one of these at this period, it is more than possible that He had brooded over not only the divine assurance—*Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*—but the divine promise, which immediately follows—*Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* This, at any rate, formed the ground of one of the subsequent temptations, and it throws some light upon the range of His consciousness and vocation.

(v) Finally and fundamentally, it is in the light

of the Servant-prophecy in Isaiah liii. that we ought to read the ransom-saying of Matt. xx. 28=Mark x. 45 : *The Son of man has not come to be ministered to but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.* The first part of the saying is the climax of the preceding argument that greatness in the kingdom of God is measured by service, and that this principle applies to the Son of man who inaugurates the kingdom, as well as to its members. The second part implies that the messianic vocation for Jesus involved not only a career of humble service but a service which culminated in death—and in death, not as a catastrophe, but as a source of eternal profit to many. The problem is to ascertain why and how the death of Jesus should produce this effect. In Isaiah liii., as we have seen, the extraordinary impression and influence of the Servant's death [1] upon the outside world is left unexplained, and at first sight it seems as if this were also the case in the synoptic passage. The term ransom (*λύτρον*) is never used elsewhere by Jesus. He does not add any explanation of it here, and it has been attributed naturally by some critics to the influence of Paulinism. But the term is not Pauline, and the authenticity as well as the present position of the saying can be established if the context is broadly interpreted.[2]

[1] In Matthew's version of the voice at the Transfiguration (xvii. 5) the words *in whom I am well pleased*, or *on whom I have set my seal of approval*, or *on whom I have fixed my choice*, are repeated from the baptism-story. They imply the Servant-prophecy (cf. Mark i. 11= Isa. xlii. 1-4 ; Matt. xii. 18-21).

[2] See on this point Professor E. F. Scott's *The Kingdom and the Messiah*, pp. 230 f. ; Professor Denney's *Death of Christ*, pp. 34 f. ; Titius, *Jesu Lehre vom Reiche Gottes*, pp. 147 f. ; and Barth's *Hauptprobleme des Lebens Jesu*[3] (1907), pp. 199 f.

An appreciation of the Marcan logion involves probably the admission of some element of truth in the view which Dr. E. A. Abbott has stated,[1] viz. that the synoptic references to Jesus being *delivered up* mean not betrayal but the deeper delivering up of His life to be an intercessory sacrifice for sinners, as in the Servant-prophecy of Isaiah liii. 12. There is reason to believe that Jesus Himself thus predicted His death as a vicarious sacrifice. He was to *suffer many things and be rejected*, like the Servant; like him also, He was to be *delivered up* (LXX of Isa. liii. 12) *for the transgressors*. It is not necessary to complicate the argument by supposing that the last three words were part of the original prediction of Jesus, but the data substantially support Dr. Abbott's general thesis. For our present purpose, this is important on account of the light which it throws upon the bearings of an apparently isolated word like that about the ransom. We obtain a valuable hint as to the context of such a saying, and this view of the statement about being *delivered up* corroborates the impression that the thought of His death as a vicarious sacrifice was not foreign to the mind of Jesus, and that the background of the thought was really furnished by the Servant-prophecy in relation to His own deeper view of the messianic vocation. We may note in passing that another indirect trace of this circle of ideas is furnished by the earlier saying, *what shall a man give as an equivalent for his life?* (ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ, Matt. xvi. 26=Mark viii. 37). Here selfish indulgence is pronounced the ruin of life, while real life is to identify oneself at all costs with the interests of Jesus and the gospel. Besides, the metaphor of

[1] In *Paradosis* (1904), pp. 3 f.; cf. *The Son of Man* (1910), 3254 f.

ransoming is used, as already in Ps. xlix. 8 f.,[1] for regaining or securing life when it is in imminent danger of death.

The kingdom which as Son of man He thus came to establish meant the forgiveness of sins and eternal life; both of these boons had to be realised in face of the evil order of the present age which held men down under the forces of the Evil One. When Jesus therefore speaks of giving His life as a ransom for the common good of men, He is thinking of something deeper than securing by His death the immunity of the disciples from danger,[2] or dedicating His life to an expenditure of pain and sympathy with mankind which meant a continuous costly effort,[3] or doing for men what any member of the human race could do, *i.e.* sacrificing Himself for their sakes.[4] The phrase certainly expresses what Jesus meant when He spoke of saving the lost, but this involved for Him a unique function as the Son of man who by His death was to complete the divine purpose which He had come to fulfil. Set in this light, the saying seems linked to the preceding words, instead of forming, as some contend, an incongruous pendant. He had just told James and John that

[1] The thought of Job xxxiii. 24 is even closer, in some ways, as it suggests the connection of sin and death (cf. Enoch xcviii. 10, 4 Macc. xvii. 21 f.).

[2] Schmiedel in *Encyclopædia Biblica*, 1887.

[3] Abbott (*ibid.*, 3271): 'The effort might in some sense be called a "ransom." It was already, so to speak, an expenditure, drop by drop, of His life-blood, to be summed up in the pouring forth of His soul on the Cross.'

[4] This is only possible if, with O. Holtzmann (*Life of Jesus*, p. 167 f.), *Son of man* is taken here, and in Luke xix. 10, in a generic sense.

it was not for Him[1] to assign (δοῦναι) positions of privilege in the kingdom, and had followed up this by adding that any one who wished to be chief among them was to be the servant of all. He now declares that the Son of man, who heads the kingdom of God, occupies that position by His service of men, and that He can and will give (δοῦναι) His life to secure theirs.

From this it is a straight line to the confession of the *Te Deum*, 'When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.' But historically rather than theologically, the saying is illuminated by the previous prophecies of the Old Testament. 'To understand Him it is sufficient to remember that the redemptive value of the sufferings of the righteous, an atonement made for sin not through material sacrifice but in the obedience and spiritual agony of an ethical agent, was one idea familiar to prophecy. It is enough to be sure, as we can be sure, that He whose grasp of the truths of the Old Testament excelled that of His predecessors, did not apply this particular truth to Himself in a vaguer way, and understand by it less, than they did. His people's pardon, His people's purity—foretold as the work of a righteous life, a perfect service of God, a willing

[1] Luke, who omits the ransom-saying as well as the logion of Matt. xvi. 26=Mark viii. 37—the former, because he omits the whole passage about the son of Zebedee which led up to it—reproduces the thought of humble service in connection with the Last Supper (xxii. 24 f.), and inserts a saying (xxii. 29 f.) which makes Jesus promise what he declines to promise to the sons of Zebedee. Luke's conception of *redemption* is narrower than that of Jesus (cf. i. 68, ii. 38, xxi. 28, xxiv. 21); he also avoids referring to the ψυχή of Jesus (cf. the omissions here and in xxii. 49, with the significant change in Acts ii. 27, 31).

self-sacrifice—He now accepted as His own work, and for it He offered His life and submitted to death. The ideas, as we have seen, were not new; the new thing was that He felt they were to be fulfilled in *His* person and through *His* passion.' [1]

It is thus plain that the suffering Servant conception was organic to the consciousness of Jesus, and that He often regarded His vocation in the light of this supremely suggestive prophecy. It is the baptism voice which marks the earliest token of this attitude upon the part of Jesus. It may indeed appear to some that there is nothing particularly notable, and perhaps something rather artificial, in the mere combination of two different sayings from the Old Testament. But the facts are otherwise. The perception of a link between such sayings, the insight which penetrates to the unsuspected unity behind both, may be truly epoch-making. If it was 'a brilliant flash of the highest religious genius' [2] to combine Deuteronomy vi. 4-5 with Leviticus xix. 18, uniting the love of God with the love of man, surely it was not less when Jesus recognised in His own character and career the union of the Isaianic Servant of Yahveh [3] and the messianic royal son of the second Psalm? Such combinations are not the cool and clever result of a scribe poring over the Old Testament texts. They witness to a depth of religious insight and experience which is creative. They interpret not texts but a Life.

[1] Dr. G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, ii. 547-8.

[2] Montefiore in the *Hibbert Journal*, vol. iii. p. 653.

[3] See above, p. 132. But this does not imply that the synoptic *Son* is a mistranslation of the Isaianic *Servant*, owing to the ambiguity of παῖς (Abbott, *From Letter to Spirit*, 805 ff.).

(*c*) The allied conception of *the Son of man* also serves to bring out the significance of the Servant-prophecy for Jesus. It is not a title to be isolated. 'The "Father in heaven," the "kingdom of God," and "the Son of man," form a trinity of ideas which have developed organically to the religious consciousness of Jesus, and which are reciprocally to be defined and understood; in them His preaching has reached its climax.'[1] What the *Son of man* specially emphasises is the divine mission of Jesus in connection with the messianic kingdom. He seems to have preferred this title to that of 'messiah'; [2] it is used comparatively freely, and apparently without any indication that it was unintelligible. At the same time, it is an open question whether it was used invariably with a messianic connotation, and how far Jesus attached a special *nuance* to it.

The first open admission of His messianic vocation (Matt. xvi. 13, 21 f.=Mark viii. 27, 31 f., cf. Luke ix. 18, 22 f.), is connected with this term.

Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?	*Who do men say that I am?*

Here Matthew inserts *I*,[3] taking *Son of man* as an equivalent for the first personal pronoun on the lips of Jesus, and this may represent the origin of the title in some of the synoptic passages.[4] Matthew also appears to correlate *the Son of man* and *the Son of God* (ver. 16) in this passage, as terms for the

[1] Holtzmann, *Das messianische Bewusstsein Jesu*, p. 54.

[2] Or to 'Son of David.' 'Son of man' had this advantage, that it was free or capable of being freed from particularistic limitations.

[3] By some early authorities με is omitted, but the omission, even if better supported, would hardly alter the sense.

[4] *E.g.* in Luke vi. 22.

human and divine aspects of the mysterious personality of Jesus, but the important feature of the saying is the explicit subsequent avowal of the messianic calling in terms of the Son of man conception.

This raises the further question, whether the prior references to *Son of man* are misplaced, or equivalent to a non-messianic title.

In the story of Jesus curing the paralytic man (Mark ii. 1 f.=Matt. ix. 1-8=Luke v. 18 f.), the closing words of Matthew about the crowd glorifying God who had given such power to *men*, have naturally suggested that originally Jesus said, *man* (not, *the Son of man*) *has power on earth to forgive sins*. This, it is argued, was the sense of the Aramaic. Jesus meant no more than to assert that if to err was human, to forgive was human as well as divine ; He claims that man, in virtue of his true humanity, can forgive sins. This is plausible, but not, I think, adequate to the context of the saying. The point of the story is blunted if the climax is reached in a statement that man, no less than God, has the right to forgive sins. The cure which follows and clinches the declaration of forgiveness is the outcome of the divine or quasi-messianic functions claimed by Jesus as *bar-nascha*, and, unless the story is arbitrarily dissected, His right to forgive and His power of dealing with disease are to be taken as co-ordinate elements of His personality. The issue between Jesus and His critics is not the prerogatives of man, but the specific power of God which operates through Jesus as *Son of man*.[1] The forgive-

[1] So *e.g.* Dalman, Fiebig, Loisy, Denney, and Montefiore; also Wrede (*Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* (1904), p. 355 f.), though he had previously taken the opposite view.

ness of sins was not directly assigned to messiah by the Jews, so far as our extant sources permit us to judge, but it was one of the privileges of the new era,[1] and as the representative of God, who inaugurates as well as announces that new era, Jesus assumes the right of conferring the boon.

It is more plausible to suppose that in the next saying, *The Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath* (Mark ii. 28=Matt. xii. 8, Luke vi. 5), we have a messianic expansion of what originally was a claim for human rights as opposed to the sabbatarian rigour of the Jewish law. But even this is not a necessary inference. Matthew leads up to the saying by a passage of his own (verses 5-7), from Q or elsewhere, which ranks Jesus higher than the temple. Mark reaches the same end by saying, *the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath.* Luke argues directly from the precedent of David to the authority of the Son of man. But if the *Son of man* is accepted as authentic in the earlier passage, there is a probability that it was original here. Besides, the connection is good. Jesus vindicates the right of the disciples because they are ' His ' disciples ; as Son of man He claims to set aside the later elaboration of the sabbath-law which encroached upon human needs. What David could do for his followers, He, the Son of man, can do for His disciples. Had the original Aramaic simply meant ' man ' in both sentences of Mark, it would have been translated as such uniformly, and, besides, Jesus would not have claimed that man was master of the sabbath which God had instituted.[2]

[1] Cf. Jer. xxxi. 34, Ezek. xxxvii. 23, Isa. xxxiii. 24 (*and the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity*).

[2] Cf. Loisy, *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*, i. 512.

From the historical point of view, it therefore remains an open question whether these two references, prior to Cæsarea Philippi, are not antedated. From the theological point of view, the decision is of subordinate importance, once it is admitted that *Son of man* in both passages is neither generic nor a colourless self-designation.

The messianic connotation of the title, on the lips of Jesus, includes humanity and apocalyptic triumph in the future. It expressed, as one critic has said, 'the messianic consciousness of Jesus in three distinct directions. It announced a messiah appointed to suffer, richly endowed with human sympathy, and destined to pass through suffering to glory.'[1] All theories that Jesus used it to denote some one other than Himself—some future agent of God—or that it merely expressed His consciousness of personal humanity, may be set aside without hesitation. There is an unequivocal class of authentic logia where it cannot possibly represent 'man,' *e.g.*, *the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head* (Matt. viii. 20= Luke ix. 58), *the Son of man came eating and drinking* (Matt. xi. 19=Luke vii. 34), and *Judas, betray the Son of man with a kiss!* (Luke xxii. 48). Both of the former probably belong to Q, and in the second the term 'man' lies near (*and they say, here is a man fond of eating and drinking*). This suggests a doubt about the assertion that Aramaic had no means of distinguishing between 'man' and 'Son of man,'—a doubt which is confirmed by the fact that when Daniel was read and translated in the synagogues, it must have been possible to feel that the Greek term 'like a son of man' represented something

[1] Bruce, *The Kingdom of God*, pp. 176 f.

different from what was meant by the ordinary Aramaic *bar-nascha*. By the tone of His voice, by the very context in which the term was used, Jesus could have conveyed to His hearers the special significance which the relevant Greek sayings of the tradition imply. The latter do not allow us to interpret the *Son of man* invariably as merely a generic term for man, or an equivalent for 'somebody,' or for 'I.' 'I doubt,' says Wellhausen, 'whether the term "Son of man" first acquired its messianic significance in Greek, although it was easier in Greek than in Aramaic to distinguish it from "man." . . . The Jerusalemite Christians would already distinguish between the specific and the generic "barnascha."' [1] If they could, Jesus could. The messianic connotation of 'bar-nascha,' which is denied on linguistic grounds by some scholars, is rendered more than probable by an exegesis of the synoptic data, which do not permit an exclusive reference of the term in its messianic sense to the later theology of the Church. If it was easier to distinguish the term 'man' in Greek than in Aramaic, it was still easier to make such a distinction and emphasis in oral than in written Aramaic, and the procedure of the Jerusalemite Christians is unintelligible, unless Jesus had already given a hint of the special meaning which He attached to the term as a designation of His own messianic personality.

It is not by accident that *Son of man* never occurs in the narrative of the gospels. The careful avoidance of the term in such passages [2] is an indication

[1] *Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*[2], p. 130.

[2] Even though *the Lord* is used, *e.g.*, by Luke as well as John.

that the evangelists did not read back the conception right and left into the tradition of Jesus. It is unlikely that the original apocalyptic use of the term led them to extend it to other passages as a self-designation of Jesus, for there is no obvious reason why it was only extended to some passages, and on the other hand, it has an apt significance in nearly all. The Son of man, as a present and as a future designation, corresponds to the double sense in which the kingdom of God appears in the tradition; it is a title closely associated with the divine realm, of which the Son of man is the founder and herald. The organic connection between the two justifies us in retaining the term in the synoptic logia which is un-apocalyptic, as well as in believing that it had an eschatological significance for Jesus Himself,

The critical alternatives are (*a*) to eliminate from the title any messianic content, or (*b*) admitting such a content, to eliminate the title from the teaching of Jesus, and to regard it as a catchword of the apostolic age (so especially, Bacon and—on other grounds—Brandt, *Die Evangelische Geschichte*, pp. 562 f.), or (*c*) to take it as a title which Jesus used, half to reveal and half to conceal the significance of His personality, an indefinite expression which, partly owing to its earlier history and partly to the larger synthesis in which He set it, meant more than a merely messianic function. Neither (*a*) nor (*b*) will cover all the data. When the Son of man passages are turned back into the original Aramaic vernacular, the generic sense of the term more than once proves jejune or unnatural, and any other sense fails on the whole to satisfy the

context. Again, in view of the appearance of the term in a messianic sense in the early source of Acts vii. 56, it is difficult to date its rise after Paul's death or to find the avenue for its introduction into the synoptic tradition in Q or the small Apocalypse. The conclusions of Lietzmann and Wellhausen are not so final that we need to be intimidated by them into a rejection of the term upon linguistic grounds, as used by Jesus in a special sense, even though the extant references may not always bear the precise weight which the evangelists attach to them. An examination of the synoptic data *seriatim* vindicates the hypothesis that Jesus called Himself 'Son of man,' and that the significance of this self-designation is to be found not simply in the apocalyptic tradition, as a title for the future functions of the Christ, but in the larger sphere of His consciousness as expressed particularly through the Servant of Yahveh prophecies.

The presence—one might almost say the predominance—of the Danielic Son of man is evident not only in sayings which, in their present form at any rate, bear the stamp of the apostolic Church, but in others which were certainly spoken by Jesus Himself. A fair example of the former class may be found in the closing paragraph of Matthew's gospel (xxviii. 18 f.), where the phrase, *all power* (authority) *is given to me in heaven and on earth*, is an echo of the Danielic prediction that *there was given him* (*i.e.* the Son of man) *dominion and glory and a kingdom*.[1] The leading example of the latter class of sayings is the

[1] This symbolic application of a highly symbolic prediction suggests that the reply of Jesus to the high priest, which is couched in terms of the same prediction, contains a figurative element.

crucial reply of Jesus to the high priest and his colleagues :—

Mark xiv. 62.	Matt. xxvi. 64.	Luke xxii. 69.
You will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.	*You will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.*	*The Son of man will be seated at the right hand of the Power of God,*

The ἀπ' ἄρτι with which Matthew, and the ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν with which Luke, introduces the saying, may be glosses; Luke's suppression of the predictions about messiah coming on the clouds (which, however, he reproduces later in Acts i. 9-11) and being seen by His former judges, reflects at any rate the theology of an age which had outlived the first generation. Jesus is condemned not for claiming to be the Son of man, but for admitting that He was the Son of God (ver. 70, cf. Mark xiv. 63), a higher title than messiah (cf. John xx. 31), but his prediction speaks of the Danielic Son of man returning in power to fulfil the royal divine purpose which His death was supposed to check. It might appear recondite to find in the words *seated at the right hand* an allusion to Ps. cx., were it not that Jesus appears to have already quoted that psalm during the last days of His life (cf. Mark xii. 36). The psalm, as a messianic ode, had a great career in the theology of the early church (cf. Mark xvi. 19, 1 Cor. xv. 24 f., Heb. i. 11 f., etc.). It is the prediction of the Danielic Son of man coming on the clouds which is the core of the saying, however, and this cannot be interpreted simply as the aspect in which the opponents who condemn Jesus

will henceforth have to regard Him, *i.e.* as judge instead of as redeemer.[1] Either the Marcan form is original, or that which Luke has reproduced but which Matthew preserves in a conflate reading, retaining *and coming on the clouds of heaven*, in spite of its incompatibility with the introductory *from henceforth*.

The primary and ultimate source of such Son of man passages is the prediction of Dan. vii. 13, a description which, by the time of the Similitudes of Enoch, had become definite and personal; the figure *like a Son of man* who symbolises Israel in the apocalyptic vision of Daniel is now *the Son of man*, a supernatural pre-existent being, who *sits on the throne of His glory*, which is also God's throne, as the judge and ruler of men. But the Enochic Son of man has no career on earth; He is only revealed in the latter days of resurrection and judgment, except that the community of the righteous know Him through the prophecies of the Old Testament. Furthermore, this Son of man is related to God not as the Father but as the Lord of Spirits.

Now it is the references in the gospels to suffering and death as the prelude to the Son of man's final victory, and to His career of lowly service and discipline on earth, which constitute the significance of the title for Jesus. The apocalyptic origin and setting of the title would be corroborated if it were true[2] that *Son of man* represented, even prior to Daniel, a semi-mythological conception of some First Man, a heavenly personality parallel to the figure of messiah, who returns with divine powers of restoring

[1] Cf. above, p. 100, and Abbott's *The Son of Man*, 3313-14.

[2] Cf. Gressmann's *Ursprung der Israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie*, pp. 360 f.

life at the end of history. The term would thus belong to the technical and traditional vocabulary of eschatology; it was capable of transformation, as when the author of Daniel interpreted it nationally instead of individually, but it regained its messianic associations later and finally furnished the basis for the specific conception of Jesus. The theory has its attractions, but it is not certain yet whether Gressmann has discovered an Ariadne's thread or a mare's nest. In any case, the term as present to the consciousness of Jesus and His age went back to the Daniel-Enoch cycle, so far as it suggested a messianic rôle. But, while the *Son of man* specially suggests the future career of Christ as the judge of men, who is only to enter on the full vocation of messiah after death, the passages which associate the Son of man with suffering point to a characteristic modification or expansion of the term by Jesus. Neither in the royal divine Son of God of the second Psalm, nor in the Danielic Son of man, was there any place for a career of suffering and death. What the synoptic tradition represents as a feature of the mind of Jesus is due to the infusion of the suffering Servant's rôle into these conceptions. As soon as Peter hails Him with the title of *the Christ, the Son of God,* He begins to explain that *the Son of man must suffer ... and be killed and be raised on the third day.* Nothing could well be more incongruous with the traditional apocalyptic rôle of the Son of man than such a destiny. The idea that the messiah was to die, after a life of humane service upon earth, was as unprecedented as the idea of a messiah who fulfilled teaching and prophetic functions among men. It is striking when the mysterious and super-

natural figure of the Son of man as presented by Daniel and Enoch is identified by Jesus with Himself, in the flash of prediction to the high priest; but it is even more striking when He is associated with humiliation and suffering. The clue to such a remarkable consciousness upon the part of Jesus is furnished by 'the inward synthesis of these two ideas of the past in an ideal, nay in a Personality transcending them both.'[1] The allusion to Isaiah liii. 12 in Luke xxii. 37 implies that the Servant-ideal was fulfilled by Jesus in more points than in the special mode of His death; in the light of it as of nothing else can we understand the bearing of several of the Son of man passages.

The dozen references to *Son of man* in the Fourth gospel are independent of the synoptic tradition; they reflect a theology which presupposes but amplifies the messianic significance of the title for the personality of the incarnate Christ. Primarily, the element of supernatural pre-existence is emphasised, as in iii. 13—*No one has ascended to heaven, except him who came down from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven*, and vi. 62—*What if you see the Son of man ascending where he was before?* This involves the return of the *Son of man* to heavenly glory, a thought which the writer connects not with the second coming, but with the ascension, or lifting up. For the latter idea he uses a suggestively ambiguous term (ὑψοῦσθαι),[2] which might denote either crucifixion (viii. 28) or exaltation in glory,[3]

[1] R. H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch*[2], p. 308.

[2] Cf. Dr. E. A. Abbott's *Johannine Grammar*, 2211 *b*, *c*; 2642 *b*.

[3] *E.g.* in the LXX of the Servant-prophecy, Isa. lii. 13, ἰδοὺ συνήσει ὁ παῖς μου καὶ ὑψωθήσεται καὶ δοξασθήσεται σφόδρα.

and sometimes seems to include both (xii. 32, 34). In iii. 14-15, the conviction that *the Son of man must be lifted up* is expressed by a comparison of the serpent which Moses lifted up before the Israelites in the wilderness; 'compared with the synoptic predictions of the passion and resurrection, this figure of the serpent seems recondite and abstruse,' [1] but it is employed to bring out the positive communication of life through the death and resurrection of Jesus, and not merely the divine necessity of His passion. Similarly, the two allusions to the Son of man being *glorified* (one public, xii. 23, and the other private, xiii. 31) imply that the crucifixion, for all its apparent degradation and defeat, is the true means of expressing and realising the divine nature; through the sufferings and self-sacrifice of Jesus, the real glory of God comes out. The words are a slightly elaborate equivalent for the synoptic phrase about *minding the things of God* (see above, p. 107). When the writer comes to speak of the communication of the divine life to the faith of men, he develops his argument in a series of subtle and paradoxical comments upon the manna in the wilderness, as he had already applied this semi-allegorical method to the legend of the serpent. The mystical interpretation of the Lord's Supper as a vital union between the participant and the living Christ (vi. 53) is farther from the teaching of the synoptic Jesus than the earlier saying (vi. 27) that eternal life is to be given to Christians by *the Son of man, for him God the Father has sealed* (*i.e.* certified or set apart for this purpose), but the latter phrase is to be read in the light of the former. The thought, though not

[1] Dr. E. A. Abbott, *The Son of Man*, 3407, i.

the expression, in i. 51, is simpler: *You shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.* As the context indicates, the idea is that Jacob's dream of communion between God and men is to be fulfilled for the Church in the person of Christ. The angels, says Philo in his exposition of Gen. xxviii. 12 (*de Somniis*, i. 22), are so-called, because they 'report (διαγγέλλουσι) the Father's injunctions to the children, and the needs of the children to the Father.' This is the function of Christ, then, to maintain unbroken communion between God and His people; consequently the metaphorical expression of the saying covers much the same thoughts as are presented by the author of Hebrews in the description of Jesus as the high priest of men. 'In and with Him, visibly for those who are His, heaven is upon earth.'[1] In most of these passages, and particularly in that last quoted, the term *Son of man* has obviously outgrown its primary messianic significance, and it may be held that this is true even of the references to the Son of man as judge. The reading in ix. 35 is doubtful. But if *Son of man* is preferred there to *Son of God*, the idea (cf. ver. 39) is of His judgment as in v. 27: *The Father has granted Him the right to exercise judgment, because He is the Son of man.* The underlying thought is almost that of Acts xvii. 31, Heb. iv. 15, and even Matt. xxv. 31, but the critical process which the person of Christ sets in motion for men tends to overshadow the more dramatic and eschatological view of judgment which the synoptic theology had put forward. Upon the

[1] Julius Grill, *Untersuchungen über die Entstehung des vierten Evangeliums* (1902), p. 48.

whole, therefore, the Fourth gospel assumes, rather than emphasises, the humanity suggested by the term *Son of man*, while it elaborates the supernatural as distinguished from the apocalyptic associations of the title.

(*d*) An important inference for the messianic consciousness of Jesus follows from the discussion with the scribes over the Davidic messiah (Mark xii. 35-37, Matt. xxii. 41-46, Luke xx. 41-44), in which He corrects the popular [1] inference that the true messiah needs to be a scion and heir of David who would fulfil, as the Psalter of Solomon expected, the nationalist hopes of Judaism, by overthrowing the Roman yoke and subduing the Gentiles into a position of respectful homage to the purified and triumphant Jews. The messianic rôle which Jesus was conscious of fulfilling had no relation to the Jewish monarchy. He appears to have accepted the title, but He repudiated both the stress laid upon it and the royalist associations with which it was invested. The authority he had to exercise was through humble love and service, and not through any material conquest such as had been for long expected from messiah as a Davidic scion. This is one of the points made by the story of the entry into Jerusalem, which is connected with the prediction of Zechariah's humble king of peace (Matt. xxi. 5), but which explicitly differs from the setting of his entry in the group of oracles[2] which have been incorporated in Zech. ix.-xiv., by ignoring the

[1] Compare the appeal of Bartimaeus, *Jesus, son of David*, and the welcome of the crowd at his entry into Jerusalem, besides the remark of the crowd in Matt. xii. 23.

[2] The influence of these oracles on the gospel tradition in other directions may be seen, *e.g.*, in Matt. xxvi. 31 = Zech. xiii. 7 (scattering of disciples), Matt. xxvii. 9 f. = Zech. xi. 13 (price of potter's field),

re-establishment of Israel in Palestine after the defeat of their pagan oppressors. It is rather significant that neither here nor elsewhere did Jesus call Himself *Son of David*; the evangelists who attach more importance than He did to the title, explain that He was born in the Davidic line (cf. *e.g.* Matt. i. 1 f., John vii. 42), but He Himself laid no claim to this, although it is quite possible that His family were of Davidic descent.

This is borne out by the further fact that Jesus does not appear to connect *the new covenant*, of which He speaks at the Last Supper, with the messianic fulfilment of the Davidic hope. Such a fulfilment would have been consonant with several lines of the older Jewish tradition (*e.g.* Pss. lxxxix. 27, and cxxxii. 11, Ezek. xxxvii. 24-25, Ps. Sol. xvii. 5 f., 23 f.), and in the primitive Church the resurrection of Jesus was interpreted in the light (Acts xiii. 34) of the enigmatic prediction (Isa. lv. 3),

> *I will make an everlasting covenant with you,*
> *Even the sure mercies of David.*

But while Jesus at the Last Supper speaks of the kingdom in terms of the covenant-idea, He does not associate it with the fulfilment of the messianic hope in its Davidic form. What made Him sit loose to the latter ideal was His higher conception of the messianic vocation in connection with the Servant of Yahveh, rather than a preference for some more

Luke xxii. 20=Zech. ix. 11 (blood of covenant), and John xix. 37=Zech. xii. 10 (penitence for murder of Jesus). More than two centuries after the death of Jesus one of the rabbis (T. B. Sanhedr.. 98 *a*) explained that the messiah would come as in Dan. vii. 13, if Israel proved worthy, but that if they proved unworthy He would come upon an ass, like Zechariah's prince, *i.e.* humbly.

apocalyptic ideal of messiah, or a desire to emphasise his divine (as contrasted with a Davidic) Sonship, though we may admit that the latter thought is not entirely to be ruled out of the argument.

(*e*) The inward aspect of the messianic consciousness is further expressed in the voice of divine approval (Matt. iii. 17, Mark i. 11, Matt. xvii. 5, etc.), *Thou art my Son, my beloved, in thee am I well pleased.* Here ὁ ἀγαπητός is a separate title, equivalent to *The Beloved*, which is again, for the gospels, practically synonymous with *The Elect*,[1] or *Chosen One* (cf. Matt. xii. 18, Luke ix. 35), a pre-Christian messianic title, which is specially used by Luke (cf. xxiii. 35), possibly owing to the influence of Enoch. But this does not imply that Jesus regarded Himself as God's Son because He was conscious of being the Chosen of the Father's love. The term *Beloved* is primarily messianic, as it is in the 'Ascension of Isaiah,' where, like *Son of God* and *Son of man* elsewhere, it has passed from a designation of Israel into a title of Israel's messiah. But neither in the theology of the gospels, any more than in Ephesians or Barnabas (3, 4) or Ignatius, is it a central term; and the personal rather than the official sense of the name, which is implied in the synoptic usage, is shown by the adjectival use in Clement of Rome (lix. 2-3) as well as in the Johannine periphrasis (iii. 35, v. 20, x. 17, xv. 9).[2]

(*f*) Jesus did not often speak of God as *the Lord* (ὁ κύριος), and none of the rare allusions[3] to Himself

[1] *The Elect* is an early variant reading for *the Son* in John i. 34.

[2] In Eph. i. 6 it reproduces *the son of His love* in Col. i. 13.

[3] Matt. vii. 22 (Luke vi. 46), Matt. xxi. 3=Mark xi. 3=Luke xix. 31, 34, and Matt. xxiv. 42; indirectly in Matt. xxii. 43 f. (*how does David call him Lord?*), Matt. xxv. 37 f. (*Lord, when did we see thee?*)

as Lord is beyond doubt; they may represent an original 'rabbi' or 'master,' which has been amplified into the divine title by the evangelists. The latter process is specially clear in Luke's use of the term as applied to Jesus in narrative or in address. This was partly due to its popularity among Gentile Christians as a more intelligible synonym for messiah or Christ, partly also to the growing sense of His divine nature. Both considerations, but especially the former, led to the title being applied to Jesus during His lifetime,[1] although even according to Luke (Acts ii. 36) He really became *Lord* at the resurrection. There is no clear trace in the theology of the gospels of any tacit protest against the contemporary tendency to apply the term to the Roman emperors. In the one passage where such a reference might be expected (Luke xxii. 26 f.), the term *Lord* is not employed.

(*g*) It is at first sight strange, in view of the later popularity of the term, that the conception of Wisdom as a personified divine power was not employed by the theology of the gospels. Yet, apart from the saying which claims for Him a wisdom superior to that of Solomon (Matt. xii. 42), Wisdom occurs only in two passages: (*a*) that of Matt. xi. 19= Luke vii. 35, and (*b*) that of Luke xi. 49. In the former, upon the practical vindication of Wisdom, Wisdom means the divine providence which inspires both John the Baptist and Jesus in their different rôles. This enters also into the conception of the second passage, where Luke personifies Wisdom, and puts into her lips, possibly

[1] So in the gospel of Peter; on the religious significance of the term, see Kattenbusch's *Apost. Symbol*, ii. 596 f.

as a quotation from some lost sapiential book, words which Matthew (xxiii. 34 f.) attributes in an expanded form to Jesus Himself: *Therefore the Wisdom of God has said, I will send to them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and drive out, that the blood of all the prophets shed from the beginning of the world may be required of this generation: . . . yea, I tell you, from this generation shall it be required.* In the pre-Christian book of Jubilees (i. 12) God promises Moses: *I shall send witnesses unto them, that I may witness against them, but they will not hear, and will slay the witnesses also, and they will persecute those who seek the Law.* The interest of this parallel is heightened by differences between it and the passage from the gospels. In the latter (cf. especially Luke xi. 45 f.) the thought is that the rigid authorities and interpreters of the Law will be responsible for the murder of God's witnesses, whereas the object of Jubilees is to uphold the validity of the Law. In the second place, the context of the passage in Jubilees suggests that, in spite of this hostile attitude to the divine witnesses, Israel will ultimately repent. The gospels, on the other hand, do not anticipate anything except impenitent enmity from the Jewish nation as a whole.

When we pass on to the Fourth gospel, it is to find several of the older conceptions of Wisdom expressed, in more or less modified form, but the conception itself absent from beginning to end. In the Book of Wisdom, Wisdom becomes practically a personified organ of the divine creation, revelation, and ethical inspiration, with cosmic functions which are assigned by Philo to the Logos as well. In the latter writer, however, the Logos is more prominent

than Wisdom, and this approximates to the standpoint of the Fourth gospel's theology, although, in contrast to Philo, the evangelist excludes Wisdom entirely from his delineation of Jesus as the Logos.[1] The very term (σοφία) is deliberately omitted, with the cognate term γνῶσις. The Christ of the Fourth gospel declares *I am the Truth*, but not *I am the Wisdom*. It is as the incarnate Logos, not as the incarnate Wisdom of God, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. The most probable explanation of this avoidance of σοφία is that it was due not only to the feminine form of the word, but to the rôle which Wisdom had already begun to play among the æons of Gnostic theosophy, where its functions and characteristics are distinctly lower than in the pre-Christian developments of the later Judaism. Even in the Similitudes of Enoch, the conception of the divine Wisdom blends with that of the Son of man, although the connection is left unexplained (xlii.). *Wisdom came to make her dwelling among the children of men and found no dwelling place*; like the Logos of the Johannine prologue, men would not receive the divine messenger, but preferred darkness to light, welcoming unrighteousness instead of Wisdom. Only, whereas the Enochic Wisdom returned to heaven baffled, the Logos became flesh and carried out the purpose of God amid the faithlessness and disobedience of men.

(*h*) The specific category of the Logos, in the Fourth gospel's theology, embraces not merely the functions of Wisdom but of more than one of the

[1] In the Poimandres theosophy, where the doctrine emerges of the Logos as the divine Son, a second God whom men learn to reverence, there is a similar absence of the Wisdom idea.

other synoptic categories for the person of Jesus. The Greek term Logos (λόγος) denoted not simply reason, but the speech in which reason uttered itself to men. Now the Greek speculations upon the Logos had been primarily concerned with the problem of the relation between the created universe and God, which was solved by the theory that the divine reason pervaded the visible world. Philo, working on the Jewish conception of the Word, made the Logos the organ of God's self-revelation to men as well as of His creative power; he thus overcame the dualism between the world and a transcendent God, and conserved the principle of spontaneous self-revelation; but this was at the expense of consistency, for his view of the Logos wavers between a more or less independent divine agent and an impersonal expression of the divine mind and will. It is difficult to ignore the Philonian background for this idea in the Fourth gospel, but the genesis of the Logos-idea is less important for our purpose than its exodus. It was baptized by the Fourth gospel into Christ, and served to guide generations of believing men into a fuller apprehension of Jesus than the previous messianic categories of the synoptic theology could have done.

Take the prologue to the Fourth gospel, to which the term, though not the thought, is confined. Phrase after phrase in it is carefully chosen to set aside some misconception of what Christ was as the true Logos. *The Logos existed in the very beginning*—not an inferior æon or emanation, subsequent to the original order of things, as *e.g.* the Valentinian Gnostics taught; *the Logos was* in vital relation *with God, the Logos was divine* by nature—

not a mere heavenly æon as the Gnostics argued, but *with God in the very beginning* of things in unrivalled supremacy. It was through this Logos alone that God created the universe. *Through the Logos everything came into being, and apart from the Logos no existence came into being*—a side-stroke at the Gnostic theories of creation through angels or a plurality of inferior æons, of matter as self-existent, and of the creator as distinguished from the redeemer. Here the Logos is, as it was to Philo in his own way, the sole organ or instrument of creation. Then follows the work of the Logos within the created universe of men. *Life*—in the pregnant sense of the term—*was in* the Logos, as divine, *and that Life was the Light of men*,[1] as opposed to the Gnostic doctrine that the powers of creation were at issue with the highest revelation of God. *The Light shines in the Darkness, but the Darkness has not understood it* (cf. iii. 19, xiii. 30). This is the Johannine form of the synoptic antithesis between the realms of Satan and God. Then comes an implicit contrast between the Logos and John the Baptist, whose ministry, in opposition to some current exaggerations, is ranked subordinate and transient. He was simply sent by God *to bear testimony to the Light. The real Light, which enlightens every man, was coming into the world*; even when John entered on his career of testimony, the Light was breaking round him upon men. But instead of accepting John's testimony, and allowing themselves to be enlightened, mankind denied and rejected Him. *He entered into the world—the world which came into being through him* (and not through any demiurge)

[1] Note the connection in iii. 16 f., 19 f., and viii. 12.

—but the world did not recognise him. He came to what was his own, but his own people did not welcome him. On the other hand, this tragedy is set off by success. *Those who do accept him—to them he has given the right of becoming God's children, that is, to those who believe in his name, who owe their birth to God, not to human blood, nor to any impulse of the flesh, nor* (as some Gnostics taught) *to the human will. So the Logos became flesh* (instead of a phantom Jesus, as the docetic Gnostics taught), *and tarried among us, and we saw his glory—glory such as an only son has, who comes from his father, full of grace and truth. . . . From his fulness* (instead of from a variety of Gnostic æons) *we have all received grace after grace*[1]*; for while the Law was given through Moses* (and therefore, being divine, is not to be rejected as the Gnostics did), *grace and truth have come through Jesus Christ* (the Christian revelation of God's reality needed a deeper and more personal medium than that of a Jewish lawgiver). This gracious embodiment of the divine reality is due to the person of the divine Son. *No one*, not even Moses, *has ever seen God, but he has been unfolded by the only divine One who lies* (once more, after His incarnate life on earth) *upon the Father's breast* (see above, p. 139).

It only remains to add that in the name of 'Jesus' there was no specifically religious meaning. Matthew's gospel, in the birth-section, attaches a pregnant

[1] Compare Philo's words in *De Posteritate Caini*, 43: 'God always measures out and apportions with reserve His first graces (χάριτας), ere the partakers grow sated and wanton; then He bestows others in place of them (ἑτέρας ἀντ' ἐκείνων) . . . and so forth, always new for old (νέας ἀντὶ παλαιοτέρων).'

sense to it: *Thou shalt call his name 'Jesus,' for he shall save his people from their sins*, an obvious play upon the etymology of the Hebrew original ('Yahveh is salvation'), but no such significance is felt by any of the contemporaries of Jesus. As for 'Christ' (χριστός, maschiah), it meant '*the* anointed One,' not one who had been anointed; it was a technical term [1] for God's vassal or regent who was to execute His royal purpose upon earth. Curiously enough, it is in the Fourth gospel alone, which (in spite of iv. 25 and xx. 31) is the least messianic of the four gospels, that the term 'messiah' is preserved (cf. i. 41). The Christ, whom Matthew hails at the outset as the true *Immanuel* ('God with us'), indeed promises at the close to be with His people for ever. And this presence is the presence of One who has passed through death for the sake of men, the presence of the Jesus who came to save His people from their sins, and saved them by shedding His blood for the forgiveness of sins (xxvi. 28). The conception is that Christ mediates a new relationship between God and man; He has complete power and authority over the people of God His Father. This idea (see above, pp. 142 f.) is one stage on the road to the Johannine view, but the conception of the mystical presence of Christ is presented by the Fourth gospel in terms of contemporary Hellenistic mysticism rather than along the lines of the Jewish view.[2]

[1] Never used absolutely, however, for the messiah till the gospels and the apocalypse of Baruch (cf. E. A. Abbott, *The Son of Man*, 3062, i.-iv.).

[2] On this *unio mystica*, in relation to contemporary Hellenistic religion, see especially Reitzenstein's *Poimandres*, pp. 245 f.

The increasing stress which begins to be laid upon faith in Christ is cognate to this belief in His spiritual presence. The qualities which draw out religious confidence are present in the Jesus of the synoptic tradition; He appeals for loyalty for His sake, and accepts the grateful homage of men. But it is faith in God rather than faith in Himself which is uppermost in His teaching. His divine authority invests Him with a unique claim, but the explicit allusions to faith in Himself are scanty. Besides Luke viii. 50,[1] there is the saying about *the little ones who believe in me* (Matt. xviii. 6). The words *in me* are not quite certain of their place in the text of the Marcan parallel (ix. 42), and their absence would tend to invalidate Matthew's phrasing,[2] as a touch of his higher christology. But the words are more congruous to the Marcan context than to the Matthean, and their presence in the latter text is probably due to the fact that the author found them already in Mark. Taken along with the general attitude of Jesus to God and men, they express the truth that He required a confidence in Himself as God's Son and Servant, with a devotion which involved trust and confidence in His divine power. He asked for more than belief in His word. He sought to attach men to Himself as God's Servant and Son. 'God is undoubtedly the only and the ultimate object of faith, but what the synoptic gospels in point of fact present to us on this and many other occasions

[1] Also the crucial importance of men's attitude to himself, Matt. x. 32-33=Luke xii. 8-9.

[2] Merx insists that they are part of the original Marcan text, on the ground that they were omitted in order to leave the term 'believe' as an equivalent for the 'fides salvifica' of the Church. But he will not accept the phrase as a genuine utterance of Jesus.

is (to borrow the language of 1 Pet. i. 21), the spectacle of men who believe in God *through him*.'[1] The soteriological aspect of this faith is naturally prominent in the Fourth gospel, where it is definitely put forward in xiv. 1. The phrase starts a problem of translation, for which the most suggestive solution resembles that proposed by Hort: *Let not your heart be troubled. Believe—believe in God and in me*, 'the first suggestion being of constancy opposed to troubling and fearfulness, and the second of the ground of that constancy, rest in God, itself depending on rest in Christ.'[2]

To sum up:

The Jesus of the primitive Church was a Jesus whom believers hailed and worshipped as the Christ of God. My point is that an examination of the earliest records, of the sources behind Mark and the other two synoptic gospels, shows that the messianic drapery or setting of His person was not the result of Paulinism impinging upon the pure and original memory of a humanitarian figure, who lived and died for the sake of a message which amounted to little more than a doctrine of theism *plus* brotherly love.[3] This is a conclusion upon which several lines of research converge. It was brought out by the recent Paul and Jesus controversy, ratified by the simultaneous investigations into the theology of Mark and Q, and corroborated, with independent

[1] Denney, *Jesus and the Gospel*, p. 255.

[2] Cf. Hort's note on 1 Peter i. 21. In John vi. 47 the Syriac versions add *in God* to *believeth*, some of the later uncials *in me*.

[3] We cannot explain primitive Christianity either as the transformation of the Jesus of history into the Christ of faith, or as the evolution of a Jesus-cult out of a current series of christological doctrines.

vigour, by the eschatological school. Only, the aid of the eschatologists is not to be accepted on their own terms. 'Whatever the ultimate solution may be,' says Schweitzer, 'the historical Jesus of whom the criticism of the future will draw the portrait . . . will be a Jesus who was messiah and lived as such.' That is a welcome and significant admission, but the messianic consciousness of Jesus is not the ultimate clue to His personality, and still less a messianic consciousness which is narrowed to the eschatological scheme. It is at this point that we join issue with the eschatologists. In the desire to find a real Jesus behind the mediæval regalia of the creeds, the earlier movements of criticism repeatedly tended to create a Christ in the likeness of modern rationalism and moralism, who was messiah, if He was messiah at all, in the rôle of a great religious reformer. In the conviction that such attempts were unsatisfactory, from the historical rather than from the religious point of view, the eschatologists have thrown into brilliant relief the supernatural features which dominate the messianic consciousness of Jesus, not merely of the primitive Church. Thus far, they argue, and no farther shalt thou go. Beyond that, research cannot proceed without recourse to what is termed psychology, and psychology is the cardinal sin here in the eyes of Schweitzer and his allies. To use psychological methods in estimating the consciousness of Jesus is to be 'modern.' I confess that to attempt a non-psychological exposition of the Son of man passages in the gospels, for example, seems to me as promising and legitimate as it would be to propose a non-philosophic inquiry into Plato's allusions to the daemon of Socrates. The rationalis-

ing and modernising explanations of Jesus have not been due to too much but to too little psychology; if they have failed to do justice to the Christ of the gospels, the fault has lain elsewhere than in the refusal to estimate so great a personality on the score of texts and current ideas.

It is the recognition of this filial consciousness of Jesus as the crucial element in the synoptic christology which really enables us to understand the continuity between the first three gospels and the Fourth. In the latter the messianic categories fall comparatively into the background, but the absorption of the Fourth gospel in the relation between the Father and the Son is theologically, rather than historically, organic to the underlying basis of the synoptic christology.[1] When the filial consciousness of Jesus is seen to be prior to the messianic, the starting-point for the special christology of the Fourth gospel is at once granted. This is brought out even when we turn to a conception which at first sight marks one of the broadest differences between the first three gospels and the Fourth, viz. the conception of the Spirit.

[1] The final and absolute significance of Christ, which the primitive tradition expressed in terms of His messianic judicial function, now appears as His eternal presence through the Spirit.

CHAPTER V

THE SPIRIT OF JESUS

THE phrase 'the Spirit of Jesus' only occurs once in the New Testament, and it is not in the gospels. Luke uses it, in the sequel to the third gospel, to describe a mysterious arrest laid upon Paul and his companions, as they endeavoured to begin a Christian mission in Bithynia: *They were attempting to make their way into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them.*[1] The difficulty of the expression was felt at an early period, and led to the omission of the words *of Jesus* from some texts of Acts. Probably it denoted a vision of Jesus which appeared to Paul or Silas in prophetic ecstasy, although the more common phrase, as the context indicates, was simply *the Holy Spirit*, or *the Spirit*. But, whatever Luke meant, it is not in this sense that we can speak of the Spirit of Jesus in connection with the theology of the gospels. Neither is it in the trinitarian sense; still less, in the opposite and untechnical sense of the disposition or genius which characterises the teaching of Jesus. It is true that this last connotation of *spirit* is not entirely absent even from the vocabulary of Paul; although he normally employs *spirit* in the sense of a divine power acting on the Christian and the church through the person of the risen

[1] Acts xvi. 7.

Christ, there are instances in which he seems to use the term *spirit* in connection with human faculties and temperament as a modern would. But by *the Spirit of Jesus*, as a rubric for some of the contents of the gospels, we mean (*a*) the divine power possessed by Jesus on earth, and (*b*) the divine power which came upon His followers after His resurrection, rendering their life stable and effective.

Jesus has a spirit of His own, like any one else (cf. Mark ii. 8, viii. 12), but the second Marcan passage is omitted, and the former altered, by Matthew and Luke, possibly from considerations of reverence, although Matthew describes how Jesus *gave up his spirit* on the cross (xxvii. 50; cf. Eccles. xii. 7, Luke xxiii. 46). Luke, on the other hand, adds that Jesus as a child developed in spirit (ἐκραταιοῦτο πνεύματι), and lays stress upon the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in Jesus during His ministry (cf. *e.g.* iv. 1, 14, iv. 18 f., x. 21). In the Fourth gospel 'the spirit' of Jesus is twice mentioned (xi. 33, xiii. 21) in connection with perturbation of soul, quite in the popular usage of the term; the characteristic doctrine of the Spirit has to be sought elsewhere.

(i) In the synoptic gospels, the only occasion on which Jesus mentions the Spirit in connection with His mission is in self-defence, when the Pharisees declared that His power of expelling evil spirits was due to collusion with Satan. He claims that He exercises this power *by the Holy Spirit*, *i.e.* as possessed by the Spirit of God, which works for the establishment of the divine reign on earth by overthrowing the reign of Satan (Matt. xii. 28, a passage from Q, where Luke characteristically—cf. i. 55,

66, 71, 74—changes *the Spirit* into *the finger* of God).[1] In the following paragraph, which asserts that no one can pillage a strong man's house unless he first seizes the strong man himself, Jesus implies that His exorcisms are the result of a previous victory over Satan. This consciousness of messianic authority over the great antagonist of God reaches back to the experiences of the temptation which followed his reception of the Spirit at baptism (Mark i. 9-13= Matt. iii. 13-iv. 11), and Luke corroborates the connection by associating the Isaianic prophecy of the Spirit with the opening of the mission of Jesus at Nazareth (iv. 17 f.). According to the naïve cosmogony which is presupposed in the theology of the gospels, Jesus *in* or *by the Spirit of God* confronts the authority of Satan as represented by the evil spirits of disease. The sufferers whom He cures are ἐν πνεύματι ἀκαθάρτῳ,[2] possessed by unclean spirits, as opposed to the pure Spirit of their deliverer, and it is the sense of His irresistible approach, heralding the reign of God, which excites the anger and dismay of the unclean spirits. According to Mark especially, they recognise their conqueror and yield sullenly to His superior power (cf. i. 23 f., iii. 11, v. 2 f., vii. 25, ix. 17 f.), as He invades their territory. It is this consciousness of being an organ of the Holy Spirit which prompts the saying of Jesus (preserved in Q, Matt. xii. 32=Luke xii. 10, as well as in Mark iii. 29), that blasphemy against the Holy

[1] In later theology the Holy Spirit is called the Finger of God (cf. Augustine on Ps. xc. 11), partly on the basis of this passage.

[2] The *wicked* (πονηρά) spirits of Luke vii. 21 and viii. 2 are not essentially different (cf. Matt. xii. 45). This belief is said to have been specially prevalent in Galilee.

Spirit, such as the Pharisees uttered in ascribing his exorcisms to Satanic influence, was beyond all pardon. These works of supernatural power authenticated Him as God's representative, whom it was perilous to despise, according to the Hebrew conception of prophetic authority (cf. *e.g.* Num. xvi. 29 f., Deut. xviii. 19). Jesus, however, claims not simply to speak the divine prophetic word, but to act under the divine Spirit, as the messiah or medium of God's redeeming purpose upon earth.

In Mark's version, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unpardonable, whereas *the sons of men* are forgiven any other sin of blasphemy. Thus it is pardonable to curse God for sending trouble, as Job was tempted to do, because man is often ignorant of the truly wise and kind purpose which lies behind apparently hostile dealings of God. Jesus was perfectly frank in His teaching on this point. He knows that God often seemed indifferent and callous, *e.g.*, in the sphere of answers to prayer.[1] Men are sometimes tempted to be unjust to God because He seems unjust to them.

> 'Behind a frowning providence
> He hides a smiling face,'

but those who see only the frowns are apt to criticise Him harshly. Such transgressions, even although they are unfair, are pronounced pardonable, because they are due to the sufferer's inability for the time being to understand the mysterious ways of providence. It is a very different matter when acts of God, such as the expulsion of the evil spirits by Jesus, which are obviously beneficent, are attributed

[1] Cf. A. B. Bruce, *The Parabolic Teaching of Jesus*, pp. 147 f.

to Satan. Here there can be no question or plea of inadvertence.[1] The sin is blasphemy of a deliberate kind, and when the scribes out of sheer malice sneered at the cures of Jesus as due to collusion with the devil, when they would do anything rather than admit or let other people admit His claims to be acting in the power of God, He declared passionately that their malignant attitude put them beyond the reach of forgiveness. *Whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin.* Here the Holy Spirit is the power of God manifested in the works of Jesus. He spoke in this way, Mark adds, *because they said, He has an unclean spirit.* But the identification of Jesus with the Holy Spirit, in this connection, does not depend upon the evangelist's comment; it is implicit in the argument.

The other version reproduced by Matthew and partly by Luke, contrasts blasphemy against the Holy Spirit with blasphemy against the Son of man. *Son of man* here means Jesus in His human aspect as the messiah; it is in the last degree unlikely that the term was originally generic, and that the contrast was between insulting criticism of a human being and blasphemy against the divine Spirit. So far as the two renderings of the original Aramaic are concerned, however, the probability lies on the side of Matthew's. To the primitive Christians, as Schmiedel points out, it would appear the height of blasphemy to say that blasphemy against Jesus

[1] There is nothing in the context to support Oscar Holtzmann's idea that the scribes viewed the good works of Jesus as a clever device of Satan to beguile men, first of all, and thus get them more completely into his power.

was pardonable, and unless the saying had been extant in some authoritative source like Q, it is unlikely that it would have been constructed out of the Marcan version. The reverse is much more probable, as indeed Wellhausen considers was the case in the saying of Mark iii. 28. We may claim, on the whole, that this consideration outweighs the difficulty of interpreting the saying intelligibly, as implying a distinction between Jesus the Son of man and Jesus as an agent of the divine Spirit. It would be easier if *Son of man* here were a personal self-designation, but in any case Jesus was speaking of Himself, and one clue to His meaning lies in the misjudgment of His family (Mark iii. 20 : *They said, He is beside himself*). By omitting this, from motives of reverence, Matthew and Luke have failed to supply a contemporary illustration of what blasphemy against Jesus as the Son of man really was.[1] His relatives might be pardoned for their crude misapprehension of His actions ; but for people like the scribes, who were face to face with His supernatural acts of healing, to discredit Him by asserting that He was inspired by the devil instead of by the pure Spirit of God was unpardonable. The difference between the two versions is one of form, therefore, rather than of spirit. Mark's tends to identify Jesus with the Holy Spirit ; a calumny against Him is a blasphemy against the very power of God. The other version contrasts the Son of man and the Spirit, and yet includes the scribes' calumny against Jesus, ' the most senseless and infamous accusation which they ever uttered,' [2] under the category of sins against the

[1] Cf. also Luke ix. 51 f., xxiii. 34.

[2] Keim, *Jesus of Nazara*, iv. 9.

Spirit; it is pronounced more than a personal insult to Jesus, which might be due to thoughtlessness or ignorance. The main drawback to the latter view is that such a distinction between the two aspects of Jesus seems to indicate a theological position of the early church, rather than what He would have been likely to say Himself in the historical situation presupposed.[1]

(ii) The allusions to the Spirit in the teaching of Jesus are comparatively rare.[2] It is promised to the disciples as a special equipment for defence, when they are brought before civil and religious tribunals, pagan and Jewish. Jesus assures them that in such moments they will be inspired to speak the apt and telling word, instead of being left to their own resources. *Do not be anxious beforehand about what you are to say; say whatever is given to you at that hour, for it is not you who speak but the Holy Spirit.* Mark puts this promise among the final directions of Jesus, in the eschatological section of the gospel (xiii. 11). Matthew sets it earlier, in the instructions of Jesus for the mission of the twelve during His lifetime, and presents a slightly altered version: *Do not be anxious about how or what you are to say, for it is not you who speak but the Spirit of your Father which speaks through you* (τὸ λαλοῦν

To profane the Name of God was for Judaism a form of irreverence which could not be forgiven in this life. According to *Joma*, 86*a*: 'For such a sinner repentance cannot suspend his punishment, nor can the Day of Atonement atone, nor can suffering avail to purify.' The Enochic references to a sin against the Spirit are dubious (xx. 6, lxvii. 10).

[2] Once the Spirit is mentioned as the source of Old Testament inspiration (Mark xii. 36 = Matt. xxii. 43). Luke, though partial otherwise to the doctrine of the Spirit, corrects this Jewish expression (xx. 42).

ἐν ὑμῖν, x. 19-20.) Luke again replaces the Holy Spirit in Mark's logion by the personal Jesus: *Settle it in your hearts not to plan your answer beforehand; I myself will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will be unable to resist or refute* (xxi. 14-15). Here the telling effect of a Christian defence is heightened, but the remarkable feature is that Luke, who elsewhere goes beyond Mark and Matthew in emphasising the place of the Spirit in the teaching of Jesus, should omit it in favour of Jesus Himself (cf. xxiv. 49). His parallel to the Matthean logion is set unhistorically as a pendant to another saying upon the Spirit: *Do not be anxious about how or what you are to answer or say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that hour what has to be said* (xii. 11-12), but the modification in xxi. 14-15 marks the first stage of the process which ends in the Fourth gospel, under the influence of Paulinism, with the correlation of Christ and the Spirit, the latter being no longer a special equipment for exorcising demons or making an effective confession, but the principle of a new life. The developed stage of reflection in Luke's version is indicated not merely by the change of an adequate testimony into an irresistible defence, but by the substitution of Jesus for the Spirit. The latter touch points to the view elaborated in the Fourth gospel, where the Spirit (παράκλητος) as the *alter ego* of Jesus animates and inspires Christians for effective testimony in face of an incredulous world (John xiv. 26, xv. 26, xvi. 13).

The background of the apostolic age is obvious in Luke's version especially; compare passages like Acts xvi. 24, 2 Tim. iv. 16, 1 Cor. ii. 13, Eph. vi. 19,

and the experiences of Stephen and Paul. But the tone of the saying, particularly in its Marcan form, is consonant with the teaching of Jesus. The Spirit is promised not as the principle of a new life but as a special equipment for emergencies, which ensures an adequate witness to the gospel, not the personal safety of the witnesses. This is on the lines of the Old Testament conception of the Spirit as prophetic and inspiring. There is no attempt, as in the Fourth gospel, to follow Paul in grouping under the Spirit faith, love, fellowship, and life eternal. Jesus stated these in other terms, and it is an incidental proof of the authenticity of this saying that it confines the Spirit to the special emergencies which met the Christian in his vocation of witnessing to the messianic cause, instead of connecting the Spirit with Jesus Himself or representing it as given in answer to prayer.

So far as the theology of the synoptic gospels is concerned, Jesus never imparted the Spirit to His disciples, nor did He even promise it explicitly. Luke supplements this omission in part by substituting *the Holy Spirit* for *good things* in the saying from Q which originally ran as follows: *If then you, evil as you are, know to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask Him* (Matt. vii. 11=Luke xi. 13), and in Marcion's edition of the gospel this was reiterated in the substitution of *may thy Holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us* for the first or second petition of the Lord's Prayer. But it is noticeable that the prediction of John the Baptist that Jesus was to baptize, not with water but with *the Holy Spirit* (ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, Mark i. 8), is not echoed

by Jesus Himself.[1] Luke interprets it as fulfilled after the resurrection in the outburst of spiritual ecstasy at Pentecost (Luke xxiv. 49, cf. Acts i. 4), and this was probably the normal view of the early church. Yet, in one important passage of the Fourth gospel (xx. 22-3), the impartation of the Spirit is associated with an appearance of the risen Lord. *He breathed on them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit:*

> *Whosesoever sins you forgive, they are forgiven;*
> *Whosesoever sins you retain, they are retained.*

The symbolims of the passage is partly visible already in the Philonic system. Commenting on Gen. ii. 7, Philo (*Legum Alleg.* i. 13), observes that 'there are three things, what breathes in, what receives the breath, and what is breathed in; what breathes in is God, what receives God is ὁ νοῦς, and what is breathed in is τὸ πνεῦμα.' Through the medium of the Spirit God conveys to man the power (τείναντος τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ δύναμιν διὰ τοῦ μέσου πνεύματος ἄχρι τοῦ ὑποκειμένου) of knowing and touching the divine nature, and the reason why πνοή is used instead of πνεῦμα in the former part of Gen. ii. 7 is that πνεῦμα is associated with energy and intensity (τὸ μὲν γὰρ πνεῦμα νενόηται κατὰ τὴν ἰσχὺν καὶ εὐτονίαν καὶ δύναμιν), whereas πνοή is a gentle, mild breath. Consequently, while the heavenly man or the νοῦς fashioned after God's own likeness may be said to partake of the Spirit, the material

[1] Jesus appears to have invested the disciples with the power of exorcising as well as of healing (in his name?) in token of the divine reign which they were to announce (Matt. ix. 35, Luke ix. 1-2, Matt. x. 1), but this is not a fulfilment of John's prediction.

man or the νοῦς ἐκ τῆς ὕλης only participates in the milder effluence of the divine Being. The Fourth evangelist, however, refrains from associating the gift of the Spirit with a new creation of the soul; he connects the vital power of it especially with forgiveness.

Now, this is a conception of the Spirit which is significant in several directions. As Baur has pointed out, 'The Spirit only comes in His fulness after the close of the earthly life of Jesus, and thus stands, as the universal Christian principle, high above the personal authority even of the apostles.'[1] The wording of this statement is not beyond criticism, but it is substantially accurate. Elsewhere in the Fourth gospel the author is not content, like Luke, to ignore the special claim on behalf of Peter, which had led in some Jewish Christian circles to the shaping of the saying in Matt. xvi. 19; he is careful to suggest Peter's subordination to the favourite disciple. Furthermore, he broadens out even the general promise of Matt. xviii. 18 into a promise[2] for the disciples as a body, and associates it with the Spirit. Finally, this incident in the upper room is the Johannine equivalent for the Lucan story of the bestowal of the Spirit at Pentecost. The writer's aim is to connect the Spirit as closely as possible with the person of Christ, a connection which is not prominent in the Lucan story, where moreover the Spirit is ecstatic or explosive rather than an expression for the indwelling presence of the living Christ. According to the Johannine pragmatism (xv. 26,

[1] *Church History of the First Three Centuries*, i. 178.

[2] Von Dobschütz (*Ostern und Pfingsten*, 1903) further identifies 1 Cor. xv. 6 with this scene.

xvi. 7, etc.), this reception of the Spirit follows the return of Jesus to the Father, and it is therefore possible that the latter change is supposed to have taken place between ver. 17 and ver. 19. In any case there is no such interval of time as in the Lucan story or even in Matthew's gospel (xxviii. 20). Jesus is glorified and the Spirit is forthwith bestowed by Him directly on the Church, without any suggestion that it was to be mediated to others through the agency of the apostles.[1] This does not imply that the author was indifferent to the historical function of the apostles in the course of early Christianity. It simply marks his desire to emphasise the significance of the Spirit as the very life of Christ in men, and to connect that Spirit, on the one hand, with the risen Jesus directly, and on the other hand, with the experience,[2] not merely with the particular activities, of the Church. The description of the Spirit being breathed upon the disciples is not exactly harmonious with the semi-personal conception which pervades the previous chapters (xiv.-xvii.): it is more realistic than we might expect from what precedes. But the motive of the incident obviously is to safeguard against the idea that the Spirit in the Church is anything else than the Spirit of Christ Himself, or that it can be mediated except through direct personal touch with Him.[3] According to

[1] This is the thought which, in another connection, underlies John iv. 23 f.

[2] Philo (*De Plantatione*, 5) explains Gen. ii. 7 (God breathed into man's face the breath of life, ἐνέπνευσε . . . πνοὴν ζωῆς) to mean that man, by receiving the breath of the divine lips, was changed into the likeness of Him who imparted the breath.

[3] *The Spirit which these who believed in him were to receive* (vii. 39). Here trust is equivalent to personal dependence.

the Johannine view, the faith and fellowship of the Church rest not upon the Spirit of God so much as on the Spirit conceived as the Spirit of Christ, on the Spirit as the *alter ego* of the risen Jesus, whose functions are bound up with the revelation of God in His Son. The indwelling of the Spirit is equivalent [1] to the presence of Christ in the heart of Christians.[2] The Spirit is *another* [3] comforter, who carries on in the new conditions the relation of Jesus to His disciples on earth, and raises that relationship to an eternal and spiritual tie between men and God. The Fourth gospel reproduces the synoptic conception that the Spirit did not exist for the Church till Jesus died and rose again (vii. 39). The precise form in which the thought is expressed is not synoptic, but the thought itself is. There could be no Spirit, in the Christian sense of the term, until Jesus had passed from earth; only when He was glorified could the Spirit come into play within the sphere of faith as an inspiring and animating power.

The fourth evangelist sums up this characteristic

[1] The two conceptions of (*a*) Christ in heaven, dwelling through His *alter ego* in the hearts of His people; and (*b*) Christ personally indwelling, are complementary expressions of the same religious experience. Both were already suggested by Paul, but they were needed specially by the Fourth evangelist, as he never speaks of Christians dwelling in the heavenly places or having their life hid with Christ in God. See on this Beyschlag's *New Testament Theology*, i. 279 f.

[2] Dr. Abbott (*Johannine Grammar*, 2352-53) subtly distinguishes three stages in xvi. 16-17: the Spirit is to be with them (μεθ' ὑμῶν) for ever, not for a short time as Jesus had been in the flesh: also, it is to be at home with them (παρ' ὑμῖν μένει), since they possess a spiritual affinity with the truth: finally, it is to be in them (καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν ἔστιν), *i.e.* in their inmost being.

[3] It is hardly possible to regard this term as 'another than yourselves' (Abbott, *Johannine Grammar*, 2793-94).

theology of the Spirit in two phrases: the Paraclete and the Spirit of truth.

(*a*) The former (παράκλητος) has no English equivalent. 'Comforter' is too one-sided, unless it is recollected that 'comfort' etymologically means to strengthen. 'Advocate' is closer to the original sense of the Greek term, but no functions of intercession are ascribed to the Spirit. Neither is much light thrown upon the Johannine usage by the fact that the Targum employs *p'raqlita* for the angelic messenger who intervenes in Job xxxiii. 23 f. to bring man to his senses before it is too late: except that here as in Philo the term 'Paraclete' has acquired the meaning of instructor or interpreter in things divine, with the natural connotation of helpfulness and encouragement. The insight and aid afforded by the Spirit as Paraclete, according to the Johannine theology, may be said to relate almost entirely to the higher gnosis of the personality of Christ. All fresh intuitions and experiences of the Christian life are referred to the operation of the Spirit as Paraclete. It is also through the Church, as exercising authority in the life and witness of Christians to the living Christ, that the Spirit convicts the outside world[1] of the tragic error which it makes in refusing to take Christ at His own and at the Church's valuation. The presentment of Christ as the light and love of God rejected by men will bring home to their conscience the sin of crucifying and denying Him: the resurrection, proved by the presence of the Spirit in the Church, shows that He did not perish as a criminal, but lives with the Father, while the real crime lies with those who put

[1] xvi. 7-11.

Him to death as a blasphemer: finally, this vindication of Christ by the resurrection [1] proves that the devil, as prince of the present world, is doomed, since the living presence of the Spirit in the Church means that Christ has been victorious over the forces of death and the devil. The three lines along which the world is thus confounded and condemned are not separate but converging. They are different directions taken by the same overwhelming force of testimony which is generated by the Spirit in the Christian community, witnessing through the very existence of that community as a spiritual body to the living Lord. The third is a climax only in form. The expectation of judgment, by being transferred to the sphere of the Spirit, ceases to be eschatological in the synoptic sense. 'The judgment upon the world which the primitive Christian community looked for at the future coming of the messiah is regarded by the Hellenic evangelist as already fulfilled in the fact that Christ, by His death and by His being glorified in the Spirit of the Church, had been proved to be the holy One of God, and the victorious conqueror of the world.' [2] The very fact that the writer uses a technical term of apocalyptic eschatology (ἐλέγχειν) in this spiritual sense seems to emphasise the transformation of the conception. The apocalyptic counterpart left no doubt as to the 'conviction' being one of doom (cf. Rev. i. 7, Fourth Esdras xii. 32 f., etc.), and this is possibly the primary meaning of the Fourth evangelist, although he does not develop the line of thought. For this

[1] This may be the allusion in the obscure phrase of 1 Tim. iii. 16 *He was vindicated by the Spirit.* See above, p. 37.

[2] Pfleiderer, *Primitive Christianity*, iv. 221.

reason, among others, it is unlikely that the convincing power of the Spirit in this passage denotes the overwhelming, mysterious effect which was sometimes produced on outsiders or on recalcitrant Christians by utterances from the lips of men who were possessed by the prophetic Spirit (instances in 1 Cor. xiv. 24 f., Ignat. *ad Phil.* 7).[1] The impression which the Spirit is described as conveying, in the Johannine doctrine of conviction, is at once more general and less remedial.

(*b*) The *Spirit of Truth* is a synonym for the Paraclete, but it is wholly confined to the operation of the Spirit on the community (contrast xvi. 7 and xvi. 13). The phrase itself is as old as the *Testaments of the Patriarchs* (cf. *Test. Jud.* 20), but the specific sense of the term is determined by the Johannine usage of truth[2] as reality, as the transcendent and absolute divine life which is fully manifested in the person of Jesus, God's Son. Christ is Himself the truth, and the Spirit of truth is His Spirit, mediating for men that personal participation in the eternal life of God which is described as the knowledge of God and of His Son Jesus Christ. The antithesis to truth is the unsubstantial as well as the false, and the corresponding antithesis is that between the flesh and the Spirit, or between light and darkness. As the grace and the truth of God—*i.e.* the gracious reality, or the real grace—came through Jesus into the world, the Spirit of truth carries on this full disclosure of the divine nature to the faith of the elect and susceptible.

[1] So Weinel, *Die Wirkungen des Geistes und der Geister* (1899), pp. 53, 189.

[2] Cf. Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, ii. 768-71.

Attempts have been made sometimes to connect both epithets. Thus Dr. Abbott suggests that the Paraclete is called *the Spirit of truth*, or *the Holy Spirit*, in order to safeguard the doctrine against any superstitious notion of the Advocate procuring special favours from God contrary to justice; similarly the references to the divine origin of the Paraclete in xiv. 16, 26, xv. 26, must be interpreted, on his theory, as emphasising the fact that the Advocate of Christians is not 'one of the ordinary kind—the kind that takes up a client's cause, good or bad, and makes the best of it.'[1] It is extremely doubtful, however, if such a shade of meaning was present to the mind of the writer. The term Paraclete was probably used by him without any such consciousness of its literal legal associations, and in calling the Spirit *the Spirit of truth*, he simply defines its sphere as the unfolding of the divine reality of life in Christ. The full truth into which the Spirit initiates the faithful is the absolute manifestation of God in the person of Jesus Christ. *He will glorify me, for he will take of mine and declare it to you.* The higher insight into the meaning of the life of Jesus, which is presented in the Fourth gospel, is thus defended as legitimate over against the vagaries of Gnostic speculation on the one side, and the opposite disinclination to advance beyond the Jewish Christian or messianic categories of interpretation which had been current among the first generation of the disciples.

The writer does more, however, than justify his own interpretation of Christ. He anticipates fresh insight into the meaning of the Lord, provided that

[1] Cf. *Johannine Vocabulary*, 1720*l*; *Johannine Grammar*, 1932.

the historic incarnation is maintained as primary. It is the work of the Spirit to unfold more and more of that meaning, as believing men keep in contact with Him who is Himself the Reality. The Fourth gospel provides for further self-expression on the part of the Christ to His Church, and these revelations in the future and of the future lie within the progressive witness of the Spirit to faith. They are described in xvi. 13-14 :—

He will declare to you the things that are to come.
He will glorify me :
for he will take of mine and declare it to you.

The former function is the Johannine equivalent for the synoptic eschatological predictions, and represents the normal Church's view of the Spirit as the inspirer of hope for the future. But the second declaration is more characteristic of the gospel's theology,[1] and though it would be unfair to read the former exclusively in the light of the latter, it is on the latter that the stress falls.

The distinctive sense of 'truth' in the Fourth gospel, as an equivalent for the reality of the divine nature, suggests that the Spirit of this ἀλήθεια would be mediated in some sense through baptism and the Lord's Supper. In the current Hellenistic theology the Spirit or essence of the deity was

[1] It corresponds to the synoptic view that the full meaning of the life of Jesus only dawned upon the Church after His death, and that the latter was needed in order to reveal His divine messianic significance (cf. Luke xxiv. 25-27, 45). This prompted the interest in the proof from prophecy, especially, but the theology of the gospels is still remote from the later Gnostic view, based on Acts i. 3, that Jesus imparted esoteric teaching during the interval between the resurrection and the ascension.

imparted to worshippers not simply through ecstasy but through participation in sacred rites and creeds, by means of which the devotee was invested with immortality and freed from the corruption of the flesh. It is a moot point how far the language of the Fourth gospel, which undoubtedly recalls this popular theology of the cults, denotes a reaction against it or against its introduction into the Christian cult. At any rate, the connection of the Spirit with baptism and the Lord's Supper is stated in a fashion which has no exact parallel in the synoptic gospels.

(*c*) In iii. 1 f. there may be an implicit contrast between the Christian sacrament of baptism and the ritual hope of regeneration which characterised some of the mysteries and cults, but, if so, this reference is wholly secondary to the main theme of the passage, which is to present the Christian condition of access to God over against the Jewish. The setting of the idea in a dialogue between Jesus and a Jewish rabbi is sufficient to suggest what was in the writer's mind. Christian baptism, admitting the convert to God's kingdom, is a regenerating process which makes him in reality what the Jewish proselyte was in name, 'a new-born child,' initiating him into the mysteries of the divine household.[1] The subsequent allusion to light (verses 19 f.) corroborates this. Proselytes to the monotheism of the Jews should be heartily welcomed, says Philo (*De Pœnitentia*, i.), since 'although they were formerly blind they have received their sight, beholding light most brilliant out of darkness most profound.'

[1] In iii. 3 (cf. Justin's *Apol.* i. 61) we have a development of **Matt. xviii. 3.**

The radical change of nature upon which Jesus insisted when He declared that men must turn and become like little children before they could enter the kingdom, is thus presented in the Fourth gospel as regeneration, a birth from above, which works an entire transformation of life. The necessity of this birth from the Spirit is traced to the nature of man as flesh. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit.* As the prologue had already pointed out, *those who become children of God* by faith in Christ *are born of God,* not of any human impulse or effort. This is the theological interpretation, from the side of God, of the experience which the synoptic gospels present as a moral change upon the part of man in response to God's call; as a theological interpretation it bears a predestinarian and semi-metaphysical appearance which is characteristic of the Fourth gospel, the more so that this gospel avoids terms like repentance and turning. But elsewhere faith is presented as the vital condition of the new birth, and even in the context of this passage it is subsequently recognised. From the outset baptism into the name of Christ had connoted an inward personal union with the nature of the Lord. Paul had deepened this relation by his faith-mysticism, and in the Fourth gospel there is as little sense of any contradiction or discrepancy between the spiritual process and the rite with which it was bound up in the normal practice of the Church. The writer significantly lays stress upon the work of the Spirit as the decisive factor. Indeed there would be no difficulty in understanding the thought of this passage were it not for the fact that he once co-ordinates water incidentally with the

Spirit. *Unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter God's kingdom.* The clause would fall at once into harmony with its context, and with the deepest principles of the Johannine theology, if the words ὕδατος καὶ were omitted [1] as a later sacramentarian gloss. Even when they are retained, they cannot be assigned any primary importance for the argument, in view *e.g.* of the fact that baptism is elsewhere omitted (cf. i. 12) in the description of how men become children of God. Baptism is interpreted as the initial act of entrance into the kingdom, on primitive lines, but the Spirit occupies the foreground of the argument, and it is no longer the Spirit, as in the primitive ecstatic view, but the Spirit as the creative power of God which produces the divine life. This is slightly closer to the Pauline conception than to the teaching of the sub-Pauline theology, *e.g.*, in Titus iii. 5, where it is argued that *God saved us not* on the score of good conduct—not, as John would say, by the flesh—*but by the bath of regeneration* (λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας) *and renewal by the holy Spirit which he poured out richly upon us through Jesus Christ*, or again in Eph. v. 26, where Christ purifies the Church by the bath of water ἐν ῥήματι. The Fourth gospel assumes the outward rite, but lays all the stress upon the spiritual attitude to God through Christ which lends value and meaning to it.

(*d*) It is a parallel conception which is presented in chapter vi., where again the vivifying power of the Spirit is brought forward, this time more prominently and in connection with eating and drinking. Here it is not a question of sustaining the life im-

[1] So *e.g.* Kirsopp Lake, *Influence of Textual Criticism on New Testament Exegesis* (1904), pp. 1 *f.*

parted at baptism, but of receiving the divine life. The metaphor is changed from birth to eating and drinking, in order to bring out the active side of the relationship on the part of men, but there is no suggestion of food mystically mediating life eternal to those who have already been born through baptism into the life of God.

There were three elements in the primitive theology of the Lord's Supper: it was viewed as (*a*) a commemoration of the sacrificial death of Jesus, which inaugurated the new order of things for the Church; (*b*) as a medium of spiritual union between the living Lord and his people; and (*c*) as a bond of brotherhood which closely knit the latter together in the mystical body of which the Lord was head. These elements are not separate; they are connected with one another, and all are present, more or less distinctly, in the various representations of the Supper which have been preserved. But the emphasis varies: now one, now another, is prominent. In the theology of the Fourth gospel it is (*b*) which is uppermost. We can feel the vibration of (*a*)[1] in one or two allusions like *The bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world* (vi. 51), but (*c*) is absent from the discussion; it is on (*b*) that the writer concentrates his attention. Here, as in the relation of the Spirit to baptism, the prominent interest is not the social or unifying conception, but the inward tie of the Christian to the Lord; the corporate aspect bulks less in the writer's mind than the individual. But although the Fourth gospel omits the synoptic Supper, probably owing to its eschatological associ-

[1] The sacrifice which preceded an ancient sacramental meal was not directly present to the Johannine type of theology.

ations in part,[1] it restates a fundamental idea of the earlier view. The synoptic words, *this is my covenant-blood*, plainly refer to the blood which Moses sprinkled on the Israelites (Exod. xxiv. 8) to ratify their covenant with Yahveh. They imply that by His self-sacrifice in death men are to enjoy the long-promised new covenant with God. His death is not the end of all things for the disciples ; it is the beginning of the new order of communion with God in which the highest hopes of forgiveness and fellowship will be realised through the relation of God to men which His sacrifice establishes. This is corroborated by the other reference of the saying to the Servant of Yahveh, of whom it is said, *I give thee for a covenant of the people* (εἰς διαθήκην γένους, Isa. xlii. 6, cf. xlix. 8). Here the function of the Servant is to mediate a covenant between Yahveh and His people.[2] Such an association of Christ's death with the new covenant—which cannot be emended out of the text—is sufficient to prove that the bond of communion is intended to unite God and His people through Jesus. This is the primary and original sense of the tradition. It is in Paulinism that the further conception of unity between Christians is introduced, not in the specific restatement of the

[1] According to the Fourth gospel (xix. 35, 36), again, Christ's body was not broken. The mystic significance of this did not harmonise with the earlier praxis of the Lord's Supper as the breaking of the bread which represented the Lord's body.

[2] Note the LXX. version of Isa. liii. 11-12 (the Lord is willing), δικαιῶσαι δίκαιον εὖ δουλεύοντα πολλοῖς, καὶ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν αὐτὸς ἀνοισει. διὰ τοῦτο αὐτὸς κληρονομήσει πολλούς . . . ἀνθ' ὧν παρεδόθη εἰς θάνατον ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ, where we have not only the Servant in relation to *many*, but the yielding up of his ψυχή on their behalf (see above, p. 146).

supper, but in the previous context, where Christians are viewed as *the body of Christ*. We have no right to read this back into the synoptic (Mark-Matthew) tradition, as *e.g.* Wellhausen and Kattenbusch propose to do, not even although the element of brotherhood and mutual unity in the Lord's Supper reappears in the liturgical passage of the Didachê (9-10). The latter tradition makes it all the more strange that the Fourth gospel, which is so concerned to emphasise the unity of Christians through their relation to Jesus Christ, should fail to employ the Lord's Supper as a symbol and sacrament of communion. A partial clue to the omission may be found, however, in the so-called Epistle to the Ephesians, which also concentrates upon the unity of the Church and yet significantly ignores the Lord's Supper as a proof and symbol of brotherhood (iv. 4 f.). *There is one Body and one Spirit, even as you were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism.* The Fourth gospel's distinctive contribution to the theology of the Last Supper is an emphasis upon it as the means of union between Christians and Christ who is the imparter of the divine life or spirit.

It presents this characteristically in connection with the feeding of the five thousand (vi. 1-14, 26 f.). Down to verse 51 (or 51*a*) there is no difficulty; the homily, in Johannine fashion, represents Christ as the source of spiritual nourishment for believing men, which is communicated to, and assimilated by, personal faith. *I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall never hunger, and he who believes on me shall never thirst. . . . I am the living bread, descended from heaven; if any one eats of this bread he shall live for*

ever. It is at this point that the difficulty begins. The following intermediate passage down to verse 56 (57, 58) insists that eternal life depends upon eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man. Then the dialogue explains this strange language. To prevent any misconception, it is pointed out that the food is the heavenly personality of the risen Son of man. *It is the spirit—i.e.* the ascended Christ—*who imparts life, the flesh is of no use whatever. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.* And, as if to emphasise the fact that this is the determining and crucial thought of the entire dialogue, Peter confesses, *Thou hast words of life eternal.*

It is natural that the middle and so-called 'sacramental' passage should have raised critical suspicions of an interpolation or an authentic source which has been worked over by the evangelist; but, even taking the entire section as it stands in the canonical text, we can do justice to its theology from the historical point of view by recalling the fact that this realistic tendency, against which the author of Hebrews protests (xiii. 9 f.) in the name of spiritual Christianity, is carried out still further as the post-apostolic age proceeds. By the time of Justin Martyr the bread and wine of the Supper effect a change in the bodies of the participants which guarantees to them eternal life, very much as in the contemporary mysteries. Now, the Fourth gospel is sometimes held to reflect an earlier stage of this tendency, and sometimes to express a sympathy with such sacramental views which is hardly reconcilable with the author's more spiritual standpoint. For each of these interpretations, especially for the latter, a case can be made out. But there is good

reason to hold that neither is adequate to the entire synthesis and situation of the Fourth gospel. What the author seeks to do is to show that the communication of the Spirit and life eternal is independent of any such feeding upon the Christian deity as present in the bread and wine of the Supper. This is one reason why he deliberately omits the institution of the Supper on the last night, and why at an earlier stage in the gospel he as deliberately inserts a paragraph full of realistic sacramental language in a context which indicates how it ought to be taken. As the long passages of table-talk in chapters xiv.-xvii. plainly indicate, he was thoroughly alive to the communion of Christians with Christ and one another, which shone out in the sacrament from Paul to the Didachê. But we have no clue to the significance which he attached to the Supper in the praxis of the Church, except the indirect clue to be found in his attitude of aloofness towards the realistic tendency of the age. Among the mystically minded it has been usual either to remain indifferent to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, or to permeate its ritual with an inner significance of their own. The history of the Church offers instances of both attitudes. It is not possible, however, to determine the positive outlook of the Johannine theology upon this sacrament. The probabilities are that it did not differ essentially from that of Paul and Luke. According to the eschatological passage in the Apocalypse of Baruch (xxix. 3 f.), at the beginning of messiah's revelation those who hunger and thirst are to be miraculously fed in the latter days by the manna which is again showered from heaven, after which the messiah comes back in glory, and those who have fallen

asleep in the hope of Him are raised from the dead. The Fourth gospel represents the living Christ as the real, spiritual manna which is to be enjoyed here and now by those who believe. Thus in the interpretation both of baptism and the Lord's Supper it is the Spirit which dominates the argument, the Spirit in connection with the personality of the risen Christ. Now, in the Fourth gospel the Pauline antithesis of flesh and spirit is conceived as a cosmic antithesis. The world or κόσμος is opposed to the divine nature, which is spirit, light, love, and truth. But the antithesis is not left as a metaphysical or moral dualism. The Father loves the world, and his love is the source of Christ's mission. Christ, as the Sent and the Son of God, has the Spirit in full measure; He possesses the divine life, and mediates it for men through His words or ῥήματα. It is significant that in the third and the sixth chapters alike these 'words' are put forward in the climax of the argument. *He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. It is the Spirit which gives life . . . the words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.* The words are semi-personified, like the Spirit. They have a rôle not unlike that which Philo assigns to the logoi or δυνάμεις in relation to the Logos;[1] they are not utterances or words, in the modern sense, so much as real powers of the divine nature, acting on behalf of God or Christ. Only their effect is not represented as magical, and indeed it seems to be in view

[1] Cf. M. Goguel, *La notion Johannique de L'Esprit et ses antécédents historiques*, p. 103. The ῥήματα of the Fourth gospel really stand between the synoptic λόγοι of Jesus and the semi-metaphysical δυνάμεις of Philo.

of such a misconception that the author refers to them in connection with baptism and the Lord's Supper. The divine life which *the words* express and convey is conditioned by obedience and trust on the part of men; thus only do they taste the heavenly gift.

(*e*) In relation to the person of Christ, the Spirit, according to the representation of the Fourth gospel, occupies a position different from that of the synoptic tradition.

The birth-stories of Matthew and Luke represent a somewhat developed stage of reflection in their association of the Spirit with the personality of Jesus, as compared with the baptism-stories (see above, pp. 136 f.). It was felt that prior to His mission Jesus must have been invested with the Spirit, and at the same time that the Spirit must have been more to Him than an equipment for the messianic vocation. Matthew, therefore, like Luke (i. 35) and Ignatius,[1] ascribes the conception of Jesus by his mother to the Spirit (i. 18, 20), while Luke, who is even more influenced by the apostolic age as the age of the Spirit, adds that John the Baptist was filled with the messianic Spirit from his birth (i. 15, 17), and that his parents also possessed the prophetic Spirit (i. 41, 67),[2] like Simeon (ii. 25 f.). The Fourth gospel, instead of employing the idea of a virgin-birth, emphasises the fact that the divine Spirit remained upon Jesus at the baptism (i. 32-33), a touch which also appears in the gospel according to the Hebrews,[3] although the latter apparently

[1] *Ad. Ephes.* xviii. 2.

[2] Also i. 47, if the Magnificat was originally spoken by Elizabeth.

[3] 'When the Lord had ascended from the water, the entire fountain [the Greek original κολυμβήθρα was a confusion for κόλυμβις of

omits any reference to the dove-symbolism. The Fourth gospel thus develops in its own way (cf. iii. 34-35 with Luke iv. 1, 14) Luke's emphasis upon the permanent endowment of Jesus with the Spirit, and if the union of the divine Spirit with the person of Jesus appears superfluous [1] after the incarnation of the Logos, it is hardly more so than the endowment of the Spirit at baptism after the Lucan explanation of the birth of Jesus. The logical position was to argue that such a supernatural being did not require the Spirit. Justin Martyr's theology reaches this stage : *We know it was not because he needed baptism or the Spirit that came upon him* [2] *like a dove, that he came to the river* (*Dial.* 88). The Fourth evangelist might have taken this view (cf. xi. 42), but he retains the incident of the Spirit's descent at baptism as a sign (σημεῖον) for John the Baptist ; it had not any specific significance for his own christology, but it served to emphasise the superiority of Christianity to the contemporary sect of John the Baptist's disciples and their sympathisers within Judaism.

One remarkable feature of this theology of the Spirit in relation to the birth of Jesus is that it never associates the Spirit with the beginning of a new

the Spirit descended and rested upon him.' But the original of the reference is probably the Enochic (xlix. 3) prediction that the Spirit of wisdom would dwell in messiah.

[1] Strictly speaking, the Fourth gospel cannot be said to describe the baptism ; it is only referred to by John the Baptist for the purpose of explaining how he came to recognise Christ.

[2] The tradition from which Justin takes his previous touch of the dove-Spirit 'fluttering' is reproduced in *Od. Sol.* xxiv. 1 (*The dove fluttered over the messiah*). On the dove-symbol, cf. Conybeare in *Expositor* (ninth series), ix. 451 f., Cheyne's *Bible Problems*, pp. 83 f., 237 f., and E. A. Abbott in *From Letter to Spirit*, 685-724.

creation in Jesus as the second Adam (cf. Luke iii. 38). According to one rabbinic conception, the Spirit brooded like a dove over the waters at the creation of the world, but there is not the slightest hint that a similar idea of the Spirit as the presiding principle of the new order occurred to the authors of the gospels. Had they shared this view, they would not have left the symbolism of the dove in the narrative of the baptism. Even the Fourth gospel does not identify the birth of Jesus with the incarnation of the Spirit of God. According to its theology, the function of the Spirit in relation to the person of Christ is to inspire the utterances which reveal the nature and purpose of God (cf. iii. 31-34, vi. 63). This corresponds to its function in the Church (cf. xiv. 26), which deals with these revelations through Christ as its material, except that, while the Son possesses the Spirit in complete measure, Christians simply receive it in part (iii. 32, cf. 1 John iv. 13).[1] As for the functions of the Spirit in relation to the indwelling Christ in chapters xiv.-xvi., they are as undefined as they are in relation to the Logos; in the prologue the Spirit is absent, in the rest of the gospel the Logos. Probably in both cases the idea of the Spirit partially coalesces with the other conception; the latter is specifically Johannine, and logically takes the place of the former, but the author carries on from the synoptic tradition and Paulinism the Spirit-idea, without definitely explaining its place in the light of his characteristic categories.[2] It

[1] The conception of the indwelling Spirit naturally is not quite consistent with this view.

[2] A similar difficulty occurs in Philo, where the conception of the Spirit in relation to the Logos and Wisdom is also uncertain.

forms one expression for the personal religious experience, parallel to those of the Logos and the indwelling Christ; but the writer, like Paul, tends to confine the relations of God and the Christian to the Spirit, grouping under the category of the Logos the cosmic and providential functions which in Hebrew thought were subsumed under Wisdom or the Spirit.

The contrast between the amount and the character of the references to the Spirit in the synoptic and Johannine theologies is at first sight remarkable, even perplexing. It is possible, of course, that owing to its messianic associations the idea of the Spirit may have occupied a larger place in the teaching of Jesus than the synoptic records would suggest, and some critics, *e.g.*, Dr. Kattenbusch [1] and Dr. E. A. Abbott,[2] even argue that a basis may be found for some of the Johannine sayings on the Spirit. Thus the former considers that words like *God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth* (iv. 24), *the Spirit bloweth where it listeth* (iii. 3, 8), and *it is the Spirit who imparts life, the flesh is of no use whatever* (vi. 63), are fairly genuine. 'Certainly,' he adds, 'Paul did not go beyond his master when he told the Corinthians what were the greater χαρίσματα.' This is true, but it does not imply that Jesus, *e.g.*, must have used a term like the Aramaic *Parklete*, which was variously paraphrased by the synoptic

[1] *Das Apostolische Symbol*, ii. 674 f.

[2] *The Son of Man*, 3618 ff. Titius (*Jesu Lehre vom Reiche Gottes*, 160 f.) also argues that if Jesus was convinced that the disciples would share in the future glory of His kingdom and life (Mark x. 45, xiv. 24), it is reasonable to suppose that He told them how this mediation would be effected, and that the conception of the Spirit formed the best Old Testament idea for such instruction.

writers. There are organic correspondences of thought between the Fourth gospel's view of the Spirit in relation to Christ and some elements, unconnected with the Spirit, in the synoptic tradition. 'At any rate, the thought of John xvi. 7, which is not positively developed until xvi. 13 f., seems to me to be too great for any one except Jesus. This conviction, held in spite of all the untoward experiences of the preceding days, that his return to the Father, so far from interfering with His training of the disciples, would, on the contrary, carry it to completion, appears to me to be so congenial to the dauntless faith and humility of the Lord, and so essential as a link in His conceptions of what His own end and the end of the world implied, that in spite of the silence of the synoptic gospels I must attribute those words to Him.'[1] However this may be, the difference between the messianic Spirit of the earliest tradition in the synoptic gospels and the indwelling Spirit of the Fourth gospel is surely too great to permit of us reading back the latter into the theology of Jesus. It is an interpretation of His person, rather than an utterance of His own faith.

Instead of attempting to harmonise the synoptic and the Johannine sayings on the Spirit, or of trying to find some basis for the latter in the historical teaching of Jesus, it is better for our present purpose to recall the inner significance of the Spirit idea in the Fourth gospel. What it lays stress on is that the religious value of Jesus consisted in His essential nearness to the God of love, the eternal and sublime One who revealed Himself thus to the faith and need of men. This absolute significance of Jesus is repre-

[1] Titius, *Jesu Lehre vom Reiche Gottes* 164.

sented in the synoptic theology as a rule by other terms than those of the Spirit. The Fourth gospel, by developing the Spirit from the older messianic sphere into one more congruous with the Greek mind, is able to express the personality of the risen Lord in terms of the Spirit, but the religious content remains under the verbal differences; the theological evolution from the naïve synoptic view to that of a personified hypostasis ought not to be allowed to obscure the identity of the devotional instinct which really prompts the more complex statement. This instinct still moves under the influence of the historic Jesus. It is the incarnate Logos which furnishes the material for the insight and vital energy of the Spirit in the community. *He will take of mine and declare it to you.* The theology of the Fourth gospel, as of the first three, would be impossible apart from the historical revelation of God in Jesus, and equally impossible if the life of Jesus on earth had exhausted that revelation. In this aspect, the doctrine of the Spirit in the Fourth gospel renders explicit what is presupposed in the earlier records.

It has an important bearing also upon the interpretation of the gospels in general as records of theology. Some Jewish rabbis, in the second century, used to attach a punning significance to the Greek term for the gospel, εὐαγγέλιον. It is just *'awon gilion*, they said, a piece of blank paper, a page without meaning or value. There are methods of treating the religious ideas of the gospels, within as well as outside the Church, which render them practically a blank page for faith. One is the tendency to explain the Christian ideas independently of a historical Jesus,

or to minimise the cardinal and creative significance of His personality for the beliefs which are associated with His name. Another is to confine His religion to a literal, historical reproduction of what He said and did on earth, identifying Him with some eschatological or humanitarian propaganda of His own age. Such methods, by minimising or exaggerating the historical significance of Jesus, are untrue to the standpoint of religious faith from which the four gospels are written, faith in the living Lord who said, according to the Fourth (xvii. 26), *I have made known to them thy name, and I will make it known.* Theologies can be got from other standpoints, but none of them will be a theology of the gospels, and it is very doubtful if any of them will prove to be much of a gospel at all.

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The critical attitude to the gospels, which is presupposed in this volume, will be found stated at length in the writer's *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (second edition), or in Professor Peake's contribution to the present series.

INDEX (*a*)

ABBOTT, E. A., 81, 94, 100, 116, 146 f., 161, 189, 193.
Aboth, Pirke, 98.
Advent, the second, 44, 45 f., 191.
Angels, 37, 88 f., 162.
Apocalyptic element in gospels, 67.
Apologetic element in gospels, 3.
Aramaic, 35, 152 f.
Arnold, Matthew, 35.
Ascensio Isaiae, 37, 165.
Assumptio Mosis, 120.

BACON, B. W., 23.
Baldensperger, 77 f., 131.
Baptism of Jesus, 31, 130 f., 179.
Baptism of Christians, 195 f.
Baruch, Apocalypse of, 202.
Baur, 187.
Beatitudes, the, 60, 73.
'Beloved, The,' 165.
Birth, stories of Christ's, 136 f., 204 f.
Blasphemy, 180 f.
Browning, 95.
Bruce, A. B., 153, 180.

CAESAREA PHILIPPI, 106 f.
Caird, E., 8.
Canon, effect of the, 30 f.
Carpenter, J. E., 119.
Charles, R. H., 160.
Cheyne, T. K., 39, 140.
Christ: meaning of term, 172; presence of, 97 f., 172; revelation of the Father, 71, 109, 119.
Christology, 9, 37, etc.
Church, sayings on the, 32, 187 f.; gospels and the, 15 f., 37 f.
Consciousness, filial consciousness of Jesus, 110 f., 130 f.
Covenant, the new, 164 f.
Creation, 85 f.

DALMAN, 137.
Daniel, 156 f.
David, son of, 163 f.
Demonology, 50, 54, 120, 178 f.
Denney, 173-4.
Didachê, the, 200.
Diognetus, epistle to, 129.
Dobschütz, von, 84, 187.
Dove, symbolism of the, 205.

Edujoth, 51.
Emperor, worship of the Roman, 107, 166.
Enoch, book of, 158 f., 168, 205.
Erskine of Linlathen, 109.
Eschatology, 41 f.
Eternal life, 45.
Ethics of Jesus, 47, 59 f., 69 f.

FAITH: characteristics of, 9, 53; in Jesus, 173.
Family, the kingdom a, 82, 92.
Fatherhood of God, 99 f., 112 f., 121 f.
Fellowship with God, 97 f.
Figurative element in gospels, 78 f.
'Finger' of God, the, 179.
Forgiveness, doctrine of, 120.
Fourth gospel, 5, 11 f., 21 f., 27 f., 44 f.; prologue, 169 f.; relation to synoptists, 24 f., 196, etc.
Francis of Assisi, 104.
Freedom, 117 f.

GLORIFYING of Jesus, the, 160 f.
Gnostics, 169 f., 194.
God, as Father, 68 f., 85 f.; as King, 91 f.; titles of, 99 f.
'Gospel,' meaning of term, 37-8.
Gospels, rise and aim of, 6 f., 10 f., 15 f.
Gospel of Hebrews, 63, 204.
Gospel of Peter, 100, 166.
Gressmann, 159.
Grill, 162.

HARNACK, 16 f., 38, 111 f., 131.
Heaven, kingdom of, 63, 103.
Herodotus, 135.
Historical Jesus, the, 174, 209 f.
Holiness of God, 100 f.
Holtzmann, H. J., 150.
Holtzmann, Oscar, 147, 181.
Hooker, 38.
Hope, 54.
Hort, 174.

IGNATIUS, 121, 192, 204.
Immanence, 96 f.
Irenaeus, 110.

JESUS: meaning of name, 171-172; messianic vocation, 17 f., 49 f., 175; sacrificial death, 141 f., 172; teaching, 44 f., 54 f., 78 f.
John the Baptist, 50 f., 170, 204.
Joma, 100, 183.
Joy, 114 f.
Judgment, doctrine of, 45 f., 121, 162, 176, 191.
Justin Martyr, theology of, 33, 201, 205.
Jubilees, book of, 167.

KATTENBUSCH, 166, 207.
Keim, 14, 182.
Kingdom of Christ, 64.
Kingdom of God, the, 53, 56, 109, etc.
Kreyenbühl, 28.

LAGRANGE, 22.
Law, the, 134.
Logos, the, 28, 137 f., 167 f.
Loisy, 61.
'Lord,' the title, 99, 165 f.
Love, brotherly, 105; God's 106 f., 120, 203.
Luke's Gospel, 14, 23, 73, 148.

MACARIUS MAGNES, 116.
Macdonald, George, 98.
Mark's Gospel, characteristics of, 5, 12 f., 22 f.
Matthew's Gospel, characteristics of, 13, 23, 63.
Maurras, C., 10.
Mazzini, 89.
Merx, 173.
Messianism, 65 f., 130 f., 153 f.
Miracles, 92 f.
Montefiore, 125, 149.
Mystery of the kingdom, the, 43 f., 55.

NATURE, God in, 93 f.
Newman, 5.
OLD TESTAMENT, use of, 9, 17, 183.
Omnipotence, 90.
Omniscience, 86.
Overbeck, 2.
Oxyrhynchite Logia, 63, 98.
PARABLES, the, 19 f., 43 f., 55, 123 f.
Paraclete, 184, 190 f.
Pascal, 7.
Paulinism, 18 f., 82, 128, 138, 196, 199.
Pentecost, 186, 187.
Pfleiderer, 191.
Pharisees, 53, 66.
Philo, 28, 85, 128, 162, 169, 170, 186, 188, 195, 203.
Poimandres, 168, 172.
'Power, the,' 100.
Prayer, doctrine of, 58 f.
Prayer, the Lord's, 73, 100.
Pre-existence, 26, 138.
Proselytes, 195.
Providence, doctrine of, 85 f.
'Q,' problems connected with, 23 f., 25, 73 f.
RABBIS, 67, 164, 206, 209.
Ransom, doctrine of, 145 f.
Redemption, 147.
Repentance, 124 f., 142.
Resurrection, 72, 117, 161, 189 f.
Righteousness, the higher, 103.
Ritschl, 47.
SABBATH, the, 152.
Sacrifice, the divine, 106 f.
Schmiedel, 24, 181.
Schweitzer, 41 f., 127, 132, 175.
Scott, E. F., 58.
Servant of Yahveh, 139 f., 199.
Sharman, H. B., 15.
Shekinah, 98.
Sin, doctrine of, 109 f., 114 f., 119 f.
Smith, G. A., 107, 148.
Solomon, odes of, 205.
Solomon, Psalter of, 139, 163.
Son of God, 131 f.
Son of Man, 20, 150 f.
Sonship of men, divine, 91 f.
Spirit, the, 177 f.
Supper, the Lord's, 164, 194 f.
TEMPLE, 94 f.
Temptation, the, 88.
Tertullian, 9, 33, 87.
Text of gospels, 30 f.
Theology, suspicions of, 1 f., 5 f.; meaning of, 38 f.; necessity of, 5, 8.
Titius, 21-2, 92, 207 f.
Traditions, origin of, 14 f.
Transfiguration, 45, 145.
'Truth,' in Fourth gospel, 192 f.
VIRGIN-BIRTH, stories of, 33, 136 f.
Volz, 57.
WEDGEWOOD, MISS, 66.
Weiss, J., 12, 42, 64, 142.
Wellhausen, 9, 12, 49, 53, 75, 86, 154.
Wernle, 22.
Wisdom, conception of divine, 166 f.
Wisdom, book of, 104, 133.
Wordsworth, 41.
'Words' of Christ, 203.
World, the, 47.
Worship, 103.
ZEALOTS, the, 53, 66.
Zechariah, book of, 163.

INDEX (*b*)

Genesis ii. 7, p. 186.
,, xvii. 17, p. 128.
Exodus xxiv. 8, p. 199.
,, xxxii. 32, p. 141.
Job xxxiii. 24, pp. 147, 190.
Psalm ii. 7, pp. 132 f., 144.
,, xlix. 8 f., p. 147.
,, cx., p. 157.
Isaiah vi. 9-10, p. 127.
,, xlii. 1 f., p. 144.
,, lii. 13, p. 160.
,, liii. 1 f., p. 140.
,, liii. 12, pp. 146, 199.
,, lxi. 1-2, p. 129.
,, lxvi. 1-2, p. 94.
Daniel vii. 13, pp. 158 f.
Matthew i. 21, p. 172.
,, i. 23, p. 172.
,, iii. 15, p. 143.
,, v. 34-35, p. 94.
,, v. 44 f., p. 104.
,, vi. 13, p. 72.
,, vi. 28 f., p. 93.
,, vi. 33, p. 103.
,, vii. 21, p. 72.
,, viii. 16-17, p. 140.
,, viii. 20, p. 153.
,, ix. 13, p. 105.
,, x. 19-20, pp. 183-184.
,, x. 23, pp. 48, 87.
,, x. 28, p. 121.
,, x. 31, p. 86.
,, xi. 4 f., p. 80.
,, xi. 11, p. 50.
,, xi. 12-13, p. 51.
,, xi. 19, pp. 153, 166.
Matthew xi. 25, pp. 90, 133.
,, xi. 26-27, pp. 110 f.
,, xii. 16-17, p. 141.
,, xii. 18, pp. 26, 144.
,, xii. 28, pp. 50, 178.
,, xii. 32, p. 179.
,, xii. 40, p. 72.
,, xiii. 16-17, pp. 71, 127.
,, xvi. 13, p. 150.
,, xvi. 18-19, pp. 32, 187.
,, xvi. 26, p. 146.
,, xvii. 24 f., p. 118.
,, xviii. 3-4, p. 195.
,, xviii. 6, p. 173.
,, xviii. 18, p. 187.
,, xviii. 20, p. 98.
,, xix. 26, p. 90.
,, xx. 28, pp. 145 f.
,, xxi. 31, p. 52.
,, xxi. 43, p. 64.
,, xxii. 41 f., pp. 163, 165.
,, xxiii. 22, p. 95.
,, xxiii. 34 f., p. 167.
,, xxv. 31 f., p. 121.
,, xxvi. 64, p. 157.
,, xxviii. 19 f., pp. 32 f., 98, 156 f., 188.
Mark i. 1, p. 135.
,, i. 8, p. 185.
,, i. 15, p. 124.
,, ii. 1 f., pp. 77, 151.
,, ii. 10 f., p. 120.
,, ii. 28, p. 152.
,, iii. 5, p. 26.
,, iii. 20, p. 182.
,, iii. 29, p. 179.

Mark iv. 11, p. 55.
,, iv. 29, pp. 43, 55.
,, iv. 38, p. 9.
,, viii. 27, pp. 20 f.
,, viii. 31 f., pp. 106 f.
,, ix. 1, p. 43.
,, ix. 42, p. 173.
,, x. 14, p. 26.
,, x. 45, pp. 145 f.
,, xii. 34, p. 52.
,, xiii. 11, p. 183.
,, xiii. 14, p. 7.
,, xiii. 31, p. 48.
,, xiii. 32, p. 133.
,, xiv. 21, p. 143.
,, xiv. 61-62, pp. 136, 157.
,, xv. 39, p. 136.
Luke ii. 32, p. 144.
,, iii. 22, pp. 31, 131.
,, iv. 16 f., p. 129.
,, vi. 46, p. 72.
,, vii. 29-30, p. 90.
,, vii. 35, p. 166.
,, x. 22, p. 111.
,, xi. 13, p. 185.
,, xi. 49, p. 166.
,, xii. 6-9, p. 88.
,, xii. 10, p. 179.
,, xii. 11-12, p. 184.
,, xii. 31, p. 86.
,, xiii. 31 f., p. 87.
,, xv. 1 f., pp. 123 f.
,, xvii. 3, p. 125.
,, xvii. 15-16, p. 92.
,, xvii. 20, pp. 46, 49 f.
,, xviii. 1 f., p. 73.
,, xx. 42, p. 183.
,, xxi. 14-15, p. 184.
,, xxi. 28, p. 69.
,, xxii. 37, p. 160.
,, xxii. 48, p. 153.
,, xxii. 69, pp. 100, 157.
,, xxii. 70, pp. 136, 157.
Luke xxiv. 49, p. 184.
John i. 1 f., pp. 169 f.
,, i. 13, pp. 33 f.
,, i. 17, p. 21.
,, i. 18, p. 139.
,, i. 29, p. 141.
,, i. 34, p. 165.
,, i. 51, p. 162.
,, iii. 3, pp. 195 f., 207.
,, iii. 13, p. 160.
,, iii. 14-15, p. 161.
,, iv. 24, pp. 113, 207.
,, v. 17, p. 95.
,, vi. 1 f., pp. 197 f.
,, vi. 51 f., pp. 198 f., 209 f.
,, vi. 62, p. 160.
,, vi. 63, p. 207.
,, vii. 39, pp. 188, 189.
,, viii. 34 f., p. 116.
,, viii. 44 f., p. 115.
,, viii. 56, p. 128.
,, ix. 35, p. 162.
,, x. 17 f., p. 143.
,, xii. 39 f., p. 127.
,, xiv. 1, p. 174.
,, xiv. 16, p. 189.
,, xiv. 23, p. 97.
,, xv. 10, p. 114.
,, xv. 14-15, p. 118.
,, xvi. 7-11, pp. 190, 208
,, xvi. 9 f., 190 f.
,, xvi. 13, pp. 192, 194, 208.
,, xvi. 14, pp. 193 f.
,, xvi. 16-17, p. 189.
,, xvii. 5, p. 138.
,, xvii. 26, p. 210.
,, xix. 35, p. 199.
,, xx. 22 f., pp. 186 f.
,, xx. 27 f., p. 11.
,, xx. 31, p. 3.
Acts i. 1, p. 38.
,, i. 3, p. 194.
,, i. 7, p. 133.

Acts ii. 36, p. 166.
,, vii. 56, p. 156.
,, xvi. 7, p. 177.
Gal. iii. 16 f., p. 128.
1 Cor. ii. 8, p. 120.
,, vii. 19, p. 23.
,, vii. 26 f., p. 61.
,, x. 16 f., pp. 199 f.
,, xv. 3, pp. 4-5, 142.
,, xv. 6, p. 187.
2 Cor. viii, 18, p. 37.
,, xiii. 14, p. 33.
Rom. i. 4, p. 138.
,, ii. 20, p. 134.
,, xiv. 17 f., p. 82.
Col. i. 13, pp. 64, 82, 165.
Eph. i. 6, p. 165.
,, iv. 4 f., p. 200.
,, v. 26, p. 197.
1 Timothy iii. 16, pp. 36 f., 191.
Titus iii. 5, p. 197.
1 Peter i. 21, p. 174.
2 Peter iii. 12, p. 59.

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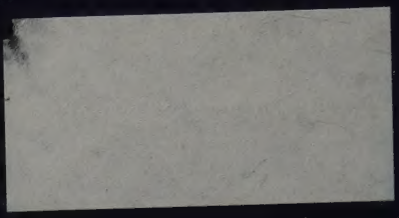
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